



(12) **United States Patent**
Chen et al.

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(45) **Date of Patent:** **Oct. 25, 2016**

(54) **SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICE WITH CONDUCTIVE PILLARS HAVING RECESSES OR PROTRUSIONS TO DETECT INTERCONNECT CONTINUITY BETWEEN SEMICONDUCTOR DIE AND SUBSTRATE**

2224/0508 (2013.01); H01L 2224/05022 (2013.01); H01L 2224/05111 (2013.01); H01L 2224/05124 (2013.01); H01L 2224/05139 (2013.01); H01L 2224/05144 (2013.01); H01L 2224/05147 (2013.01); H01L 2224/05155 (2013.01);

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(Continued)

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(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC H01L 21/187; H01L 21/76251; H01L 23/485; H01L 23/4825; H01L 23/488; H01L 24/01; H01L 24/04; H01L 24/10; H01L 33/62
USPC 257/737, 738, 779, 780
See application file for complete search history.

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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Primary Examiner — Hoai V Pham

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(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Robert D. Atkins; Atkins and Associates, P.C.

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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(51) **Int. Cl.**

H01L 23/48 (2006.01)
H01L 23/52 (2006.01)

(Continued)

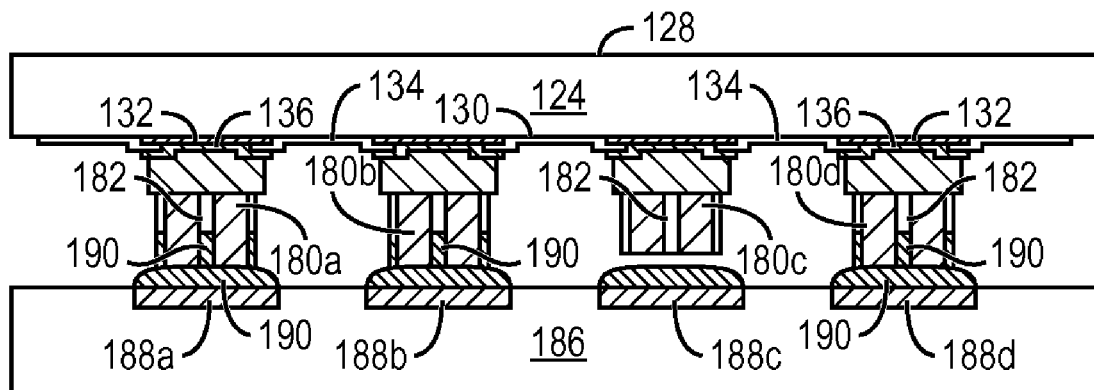
(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **H01L 24/10** (2013.01); **H01L 22/12** (2013.01); **H01L 24/11** (2013.01); **H01L 24/13** (2013.01); **H01L 24/16** (2013.01); **H01L 24/81** (2013.01); **H01L 2224/0345** (2013.01); **H01L 2224/0346** (2013.01); **H01L 2224/03452** (2013.01); **H01L 2224/0401** (2013.01); **H01L**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A semiconductor device has a semiconductor die and conductive pillar with a recess or protrusion formed over a surface of the semiconductor die. The conductive pillar is made by forming a patterning layer over the semiconductor die, forming an opening with a recess or protrusion in the patterning layer, depositing conductive material in the opening and recess or protrusion, and removing the patterning layer. A substrate has bump material deposited over a conductive layer formed over a surface of the substrate. The bump material is melted. The semiconductor die is pressed toward the substrate to enable the melted bump material to flow into the recess or over the protrusion if the conductive pillar makes connection to the conductive layer. A presence or absence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion of the conductive pillar is detected by X-ray or visual inspection.

25 Claims, 20 Drawing Sheets



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H01L 29/40 (2006.01) (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/81444 (2013.01); *H01L*
H01L 23/00 (2006.01) 2224/81447 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/81455
H01L 21/66 (2006.01) (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/94 (2013.01); *H01L*
2924/00011 (2013.01); *H01L* 2924/00014
(52) **U.S. Cl.** (2013.01); *H01L* 2924/01322 (2013.01); *H01L*
CPC *H01L*2224/05572 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/05573 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/05666
(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/05681 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/11 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/1132
(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/1146 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/11472 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/11474
(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/11903 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/13 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/1308
(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/13015 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/13017 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/13082
(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/13111 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/13124 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/13139
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(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/14131 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/16058 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/81097
(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/81193 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/81411 (2013.01); *H01L* 2224/81413
(2013.01); *H01L* 2224/81416 (2013.01); *H01L* 2924/12041 (2013.01); *H01L* 2924/12042
(2013.01); *H01L* 2924/1306 (2013.01); *H01L* 2924/13091 (2013.01); *H01L* 2924/181
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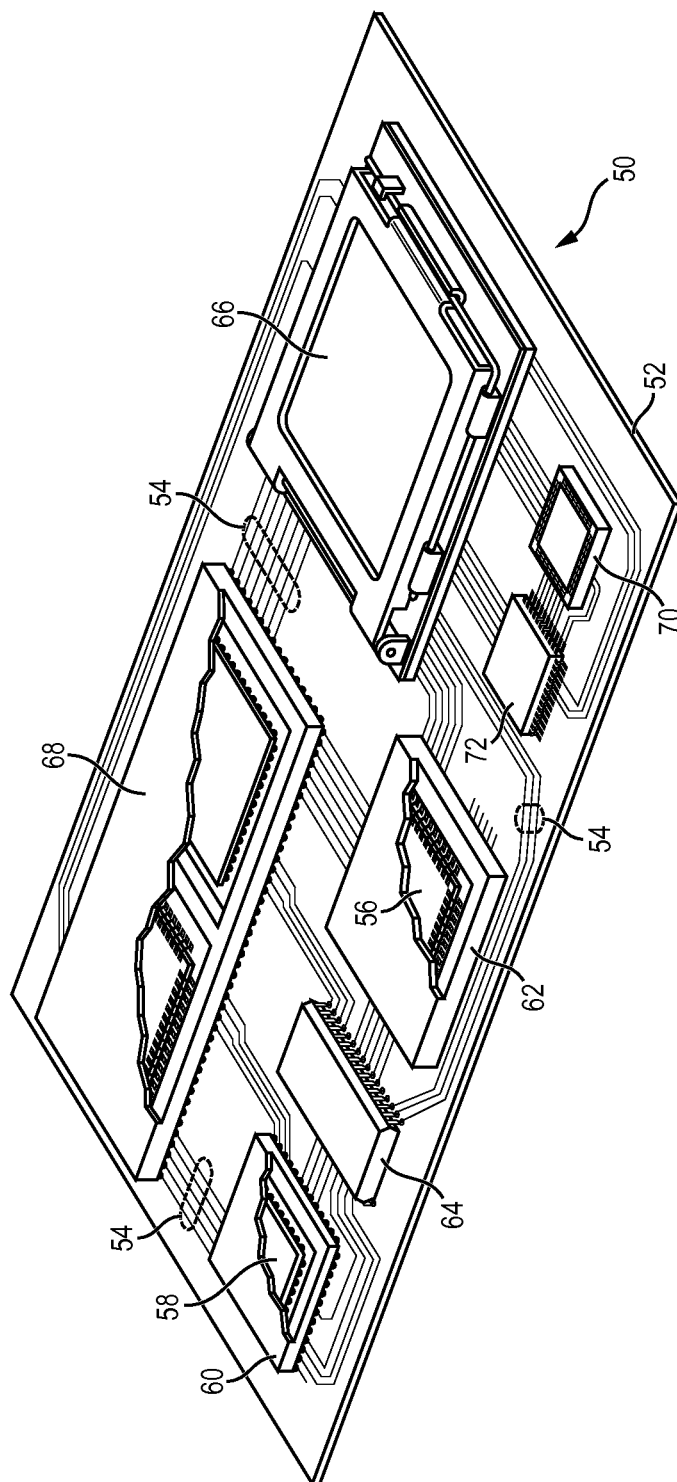


FIG. 1

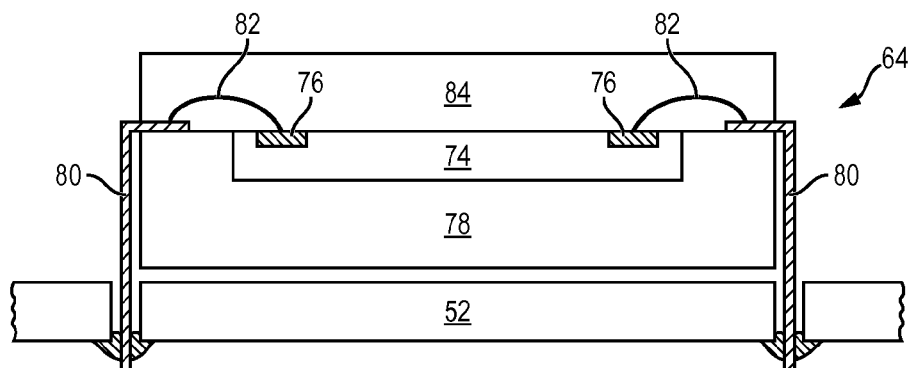


FIG. 2a

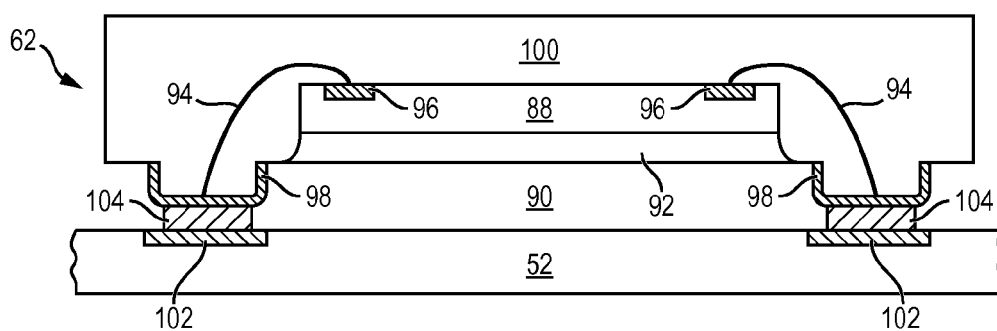


FIG. 2b

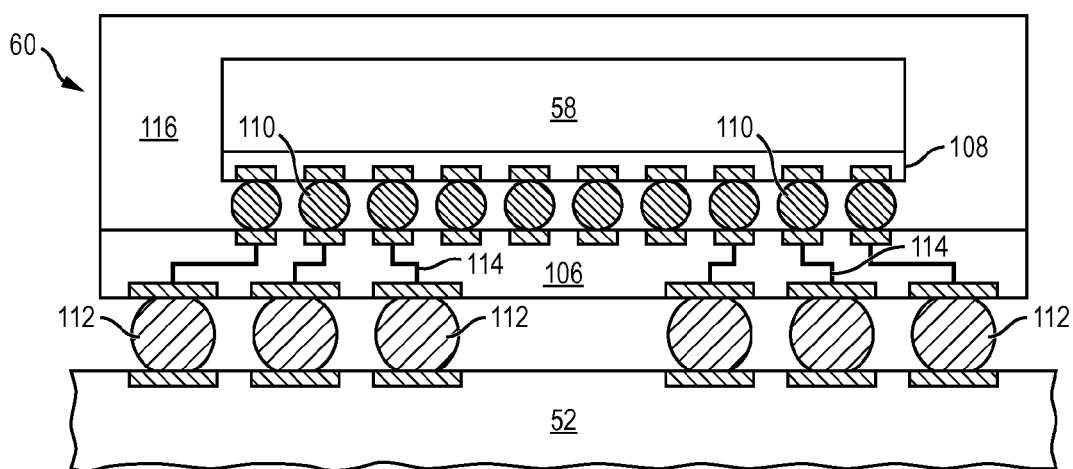
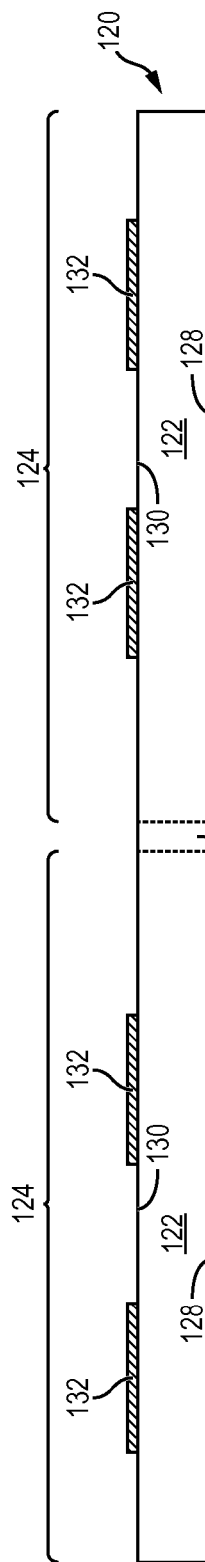
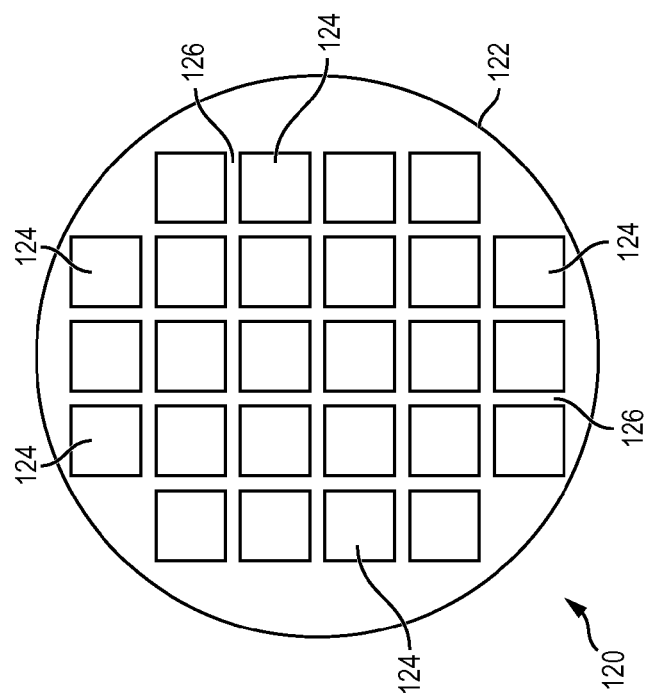


FIG. 2c



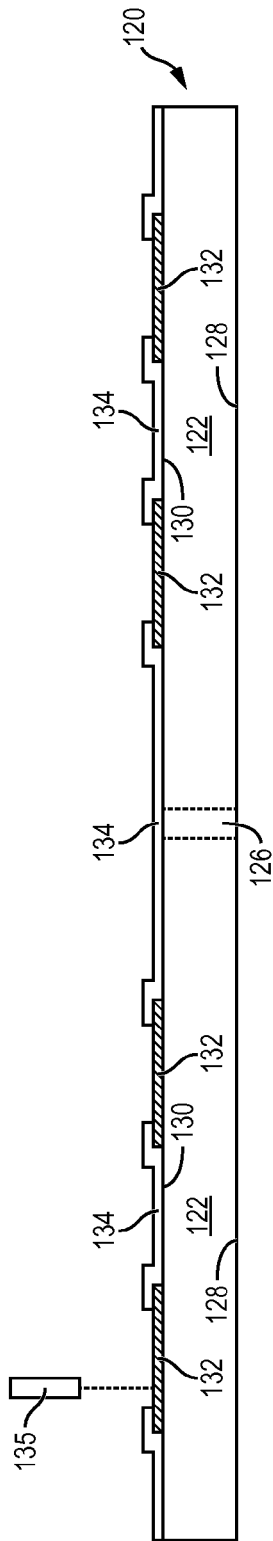


FIG. 3c

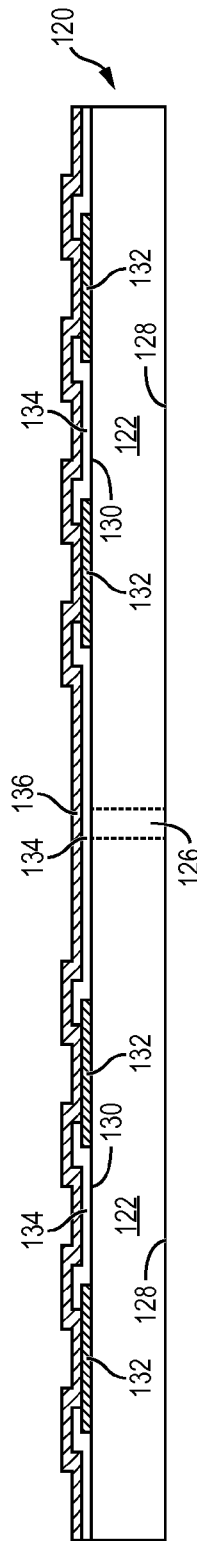


FIG. 3d

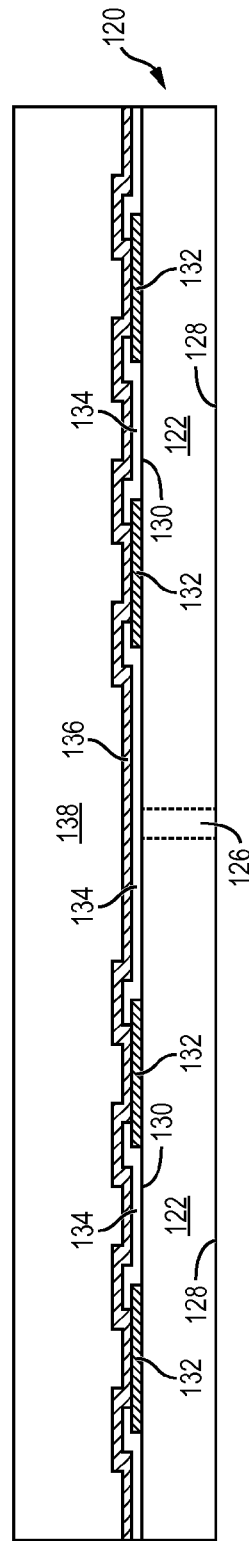


FIG. 3e

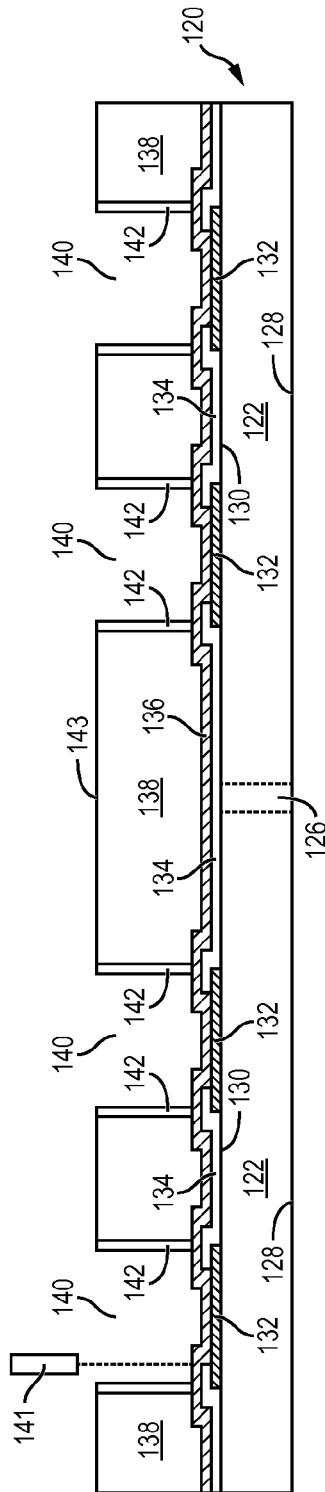


FIG. 3f

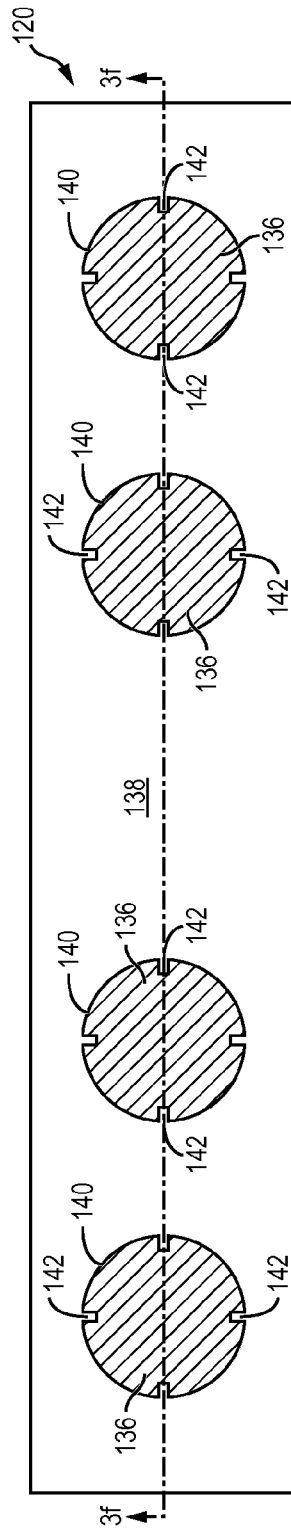


FIG. 3g

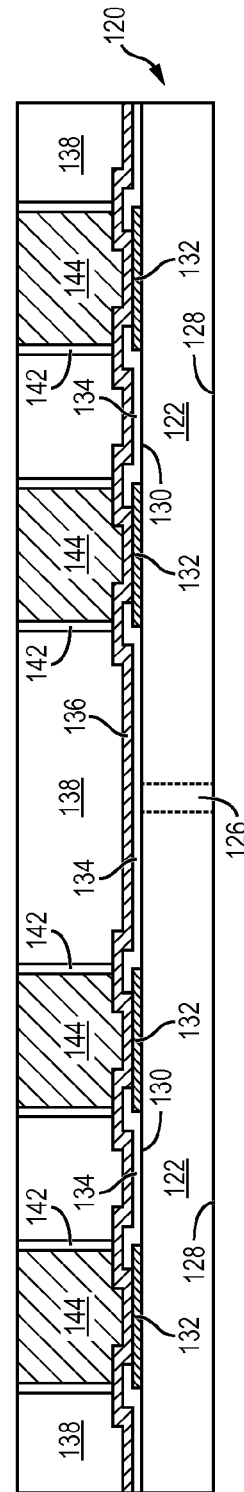


FIG. 3h

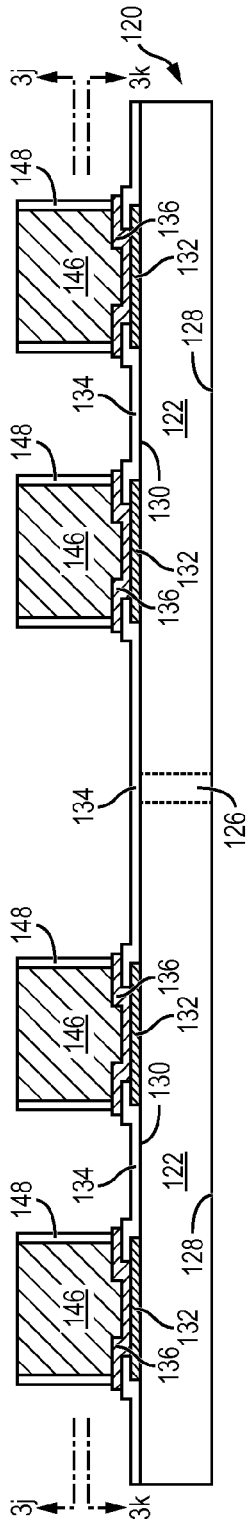


FIG. 3i



FIG. 3j

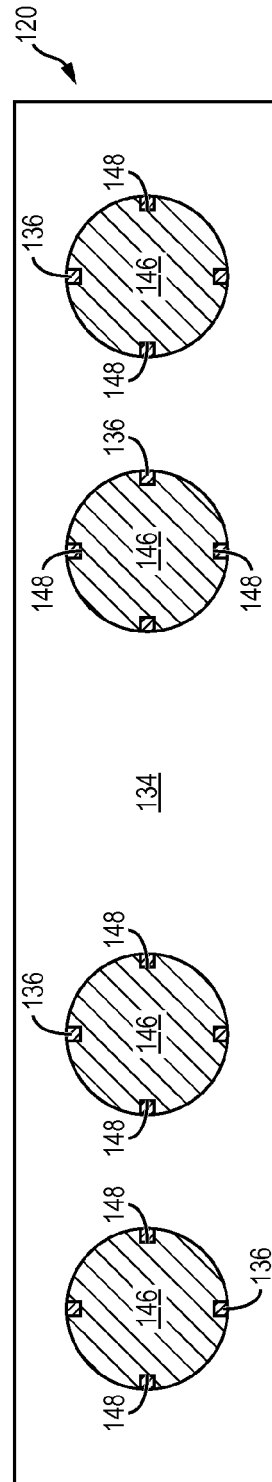


FIG. 3k

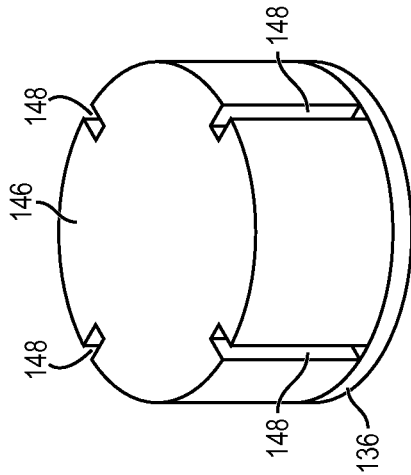


FIG. 3l

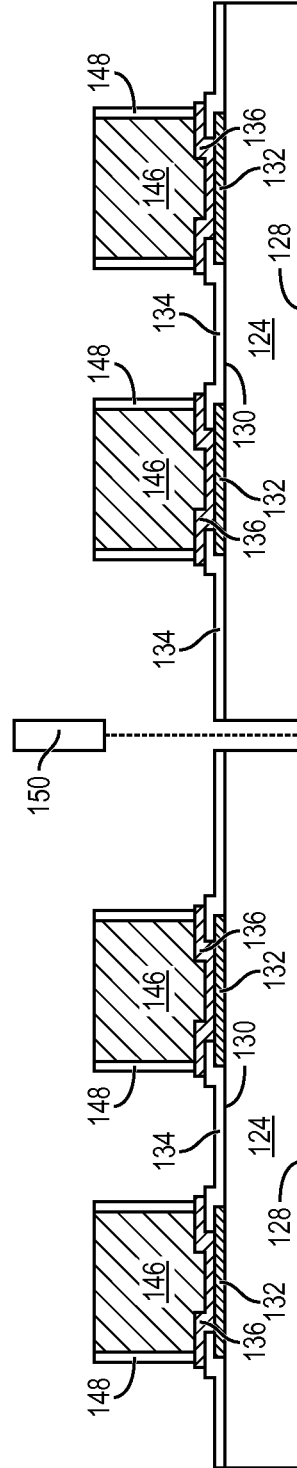


FIG. 3m

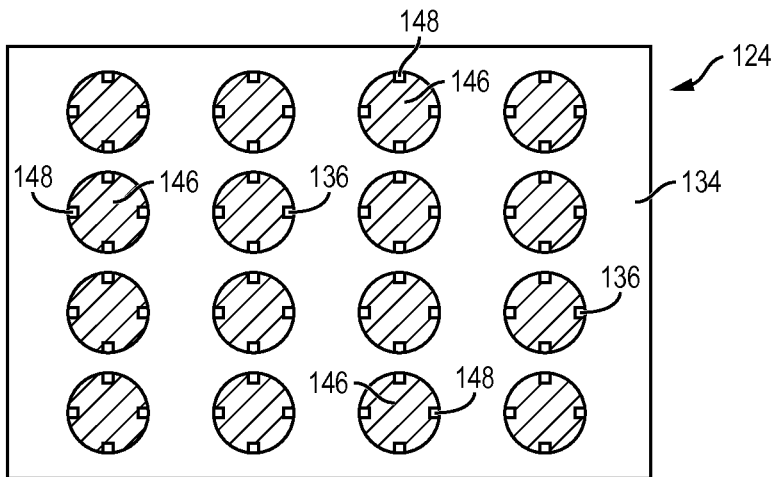


FIG. 4a

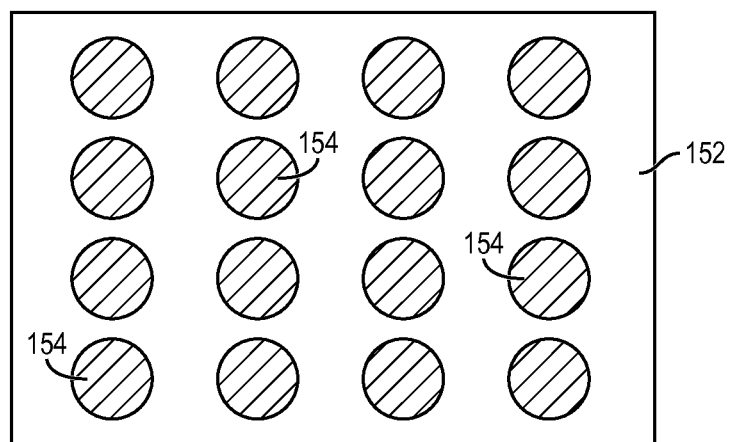


FIG. 4b

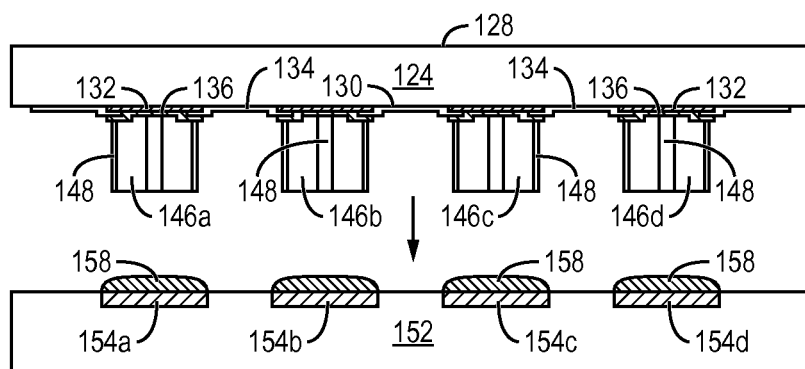


FIG. 4c

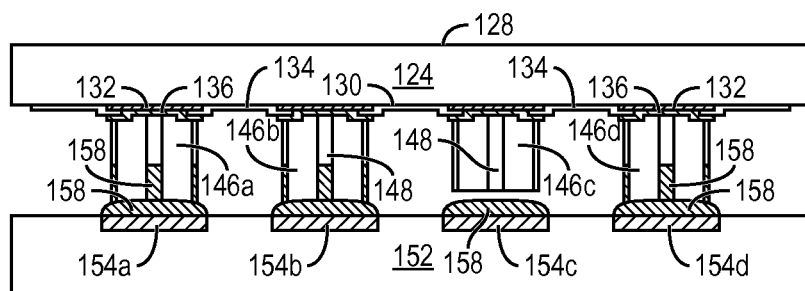


FIG. 4d

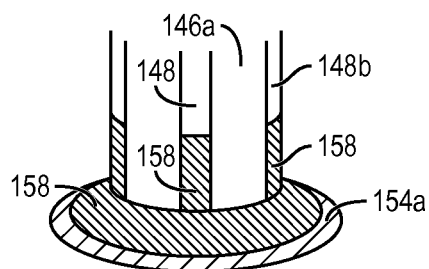


FIG. 4e

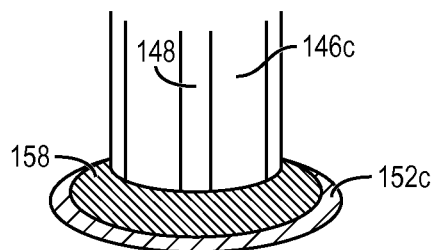


FIG. 4f

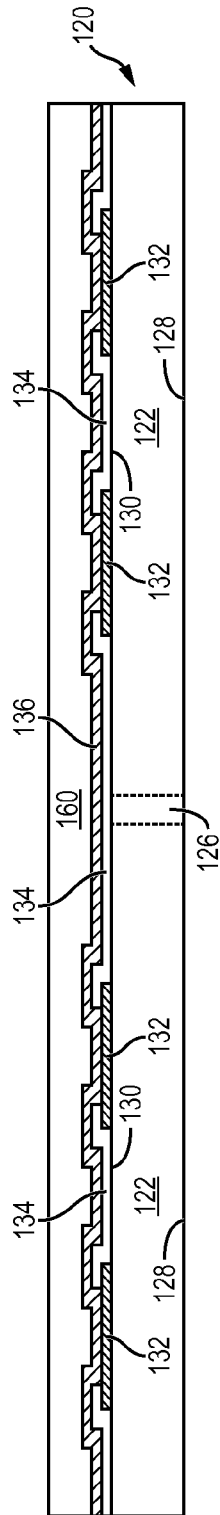


FIG. 5a

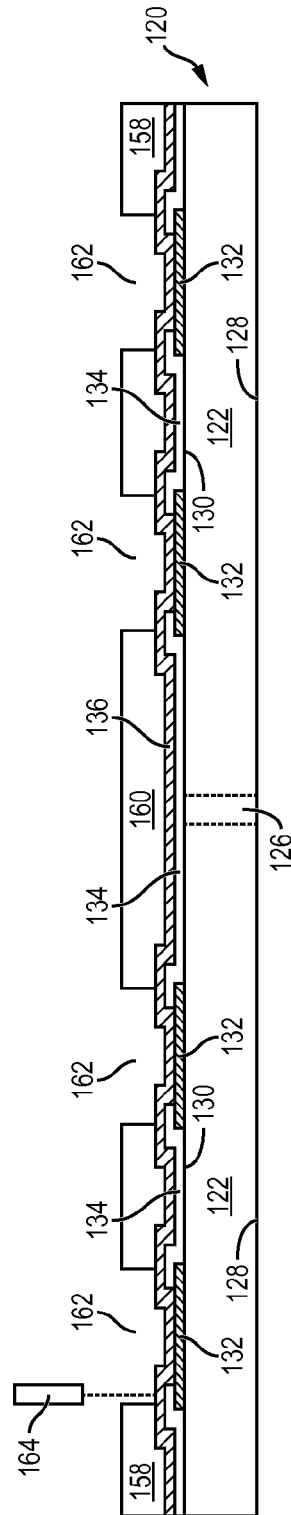


FIG. 5b

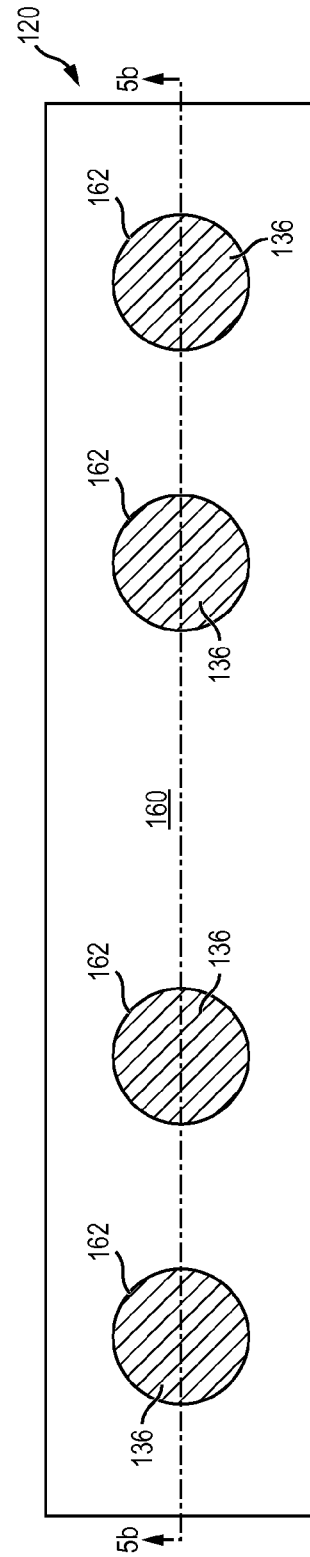


FIG. 5c

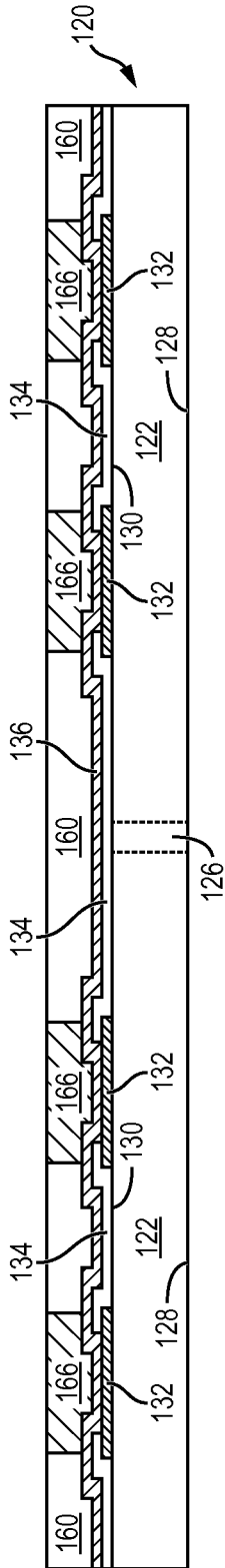


FIG. 5d

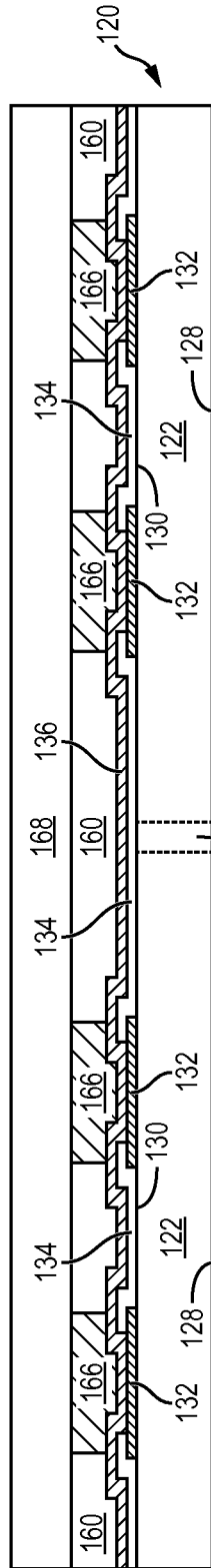


FIG. 5e

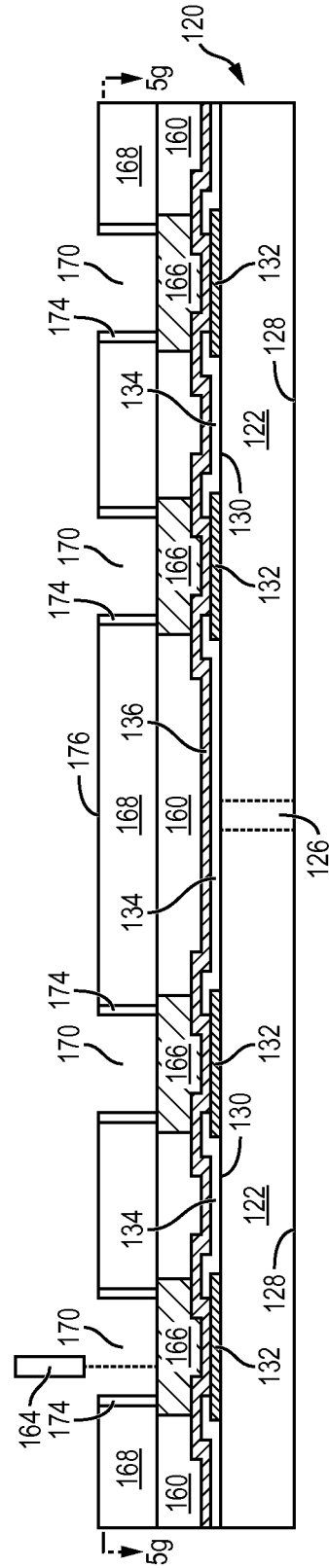


FIG. 5f

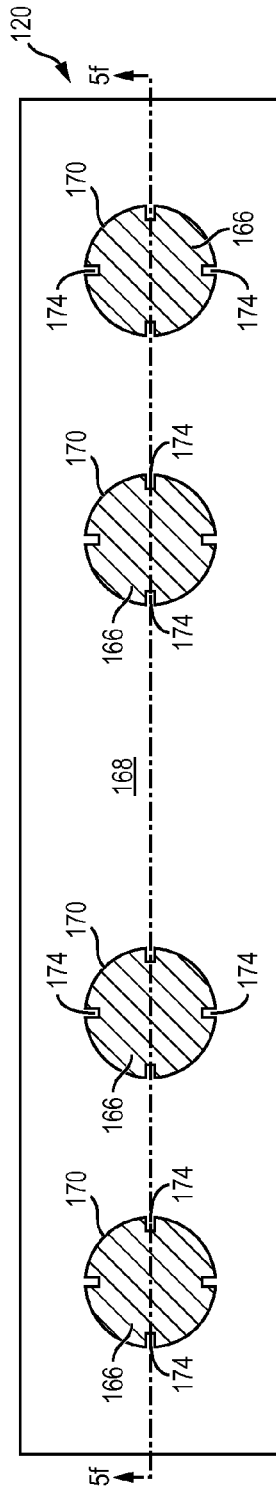


FIG. 5g

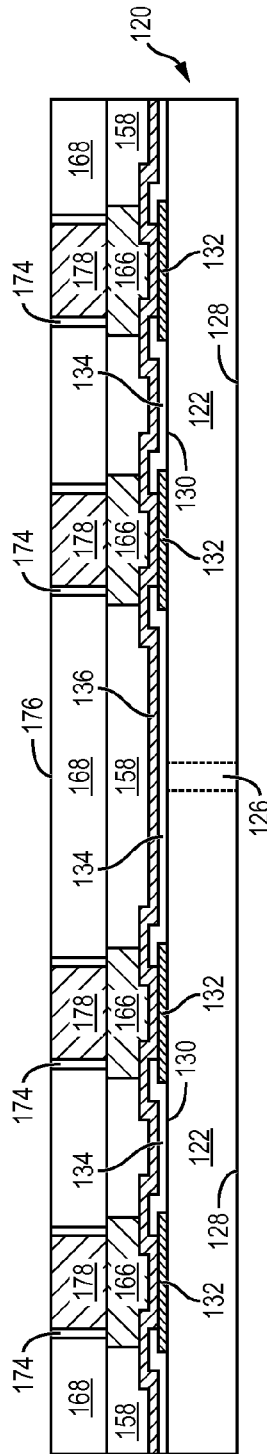


FIG. 5h

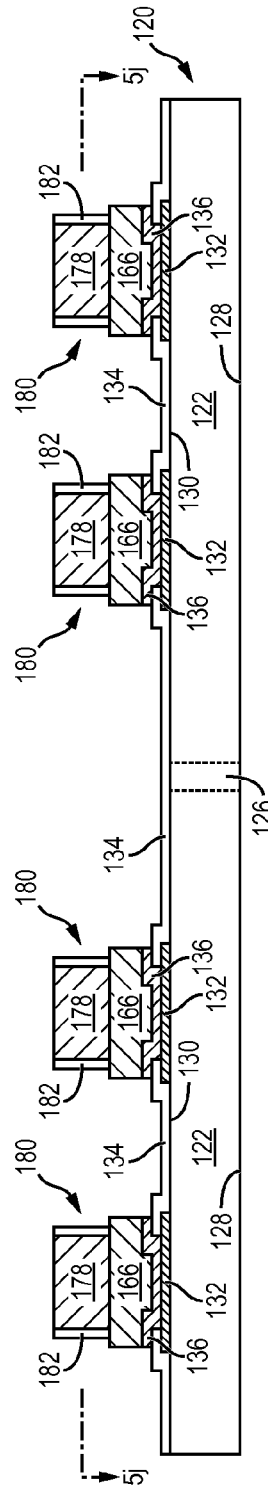


FIG. 5i

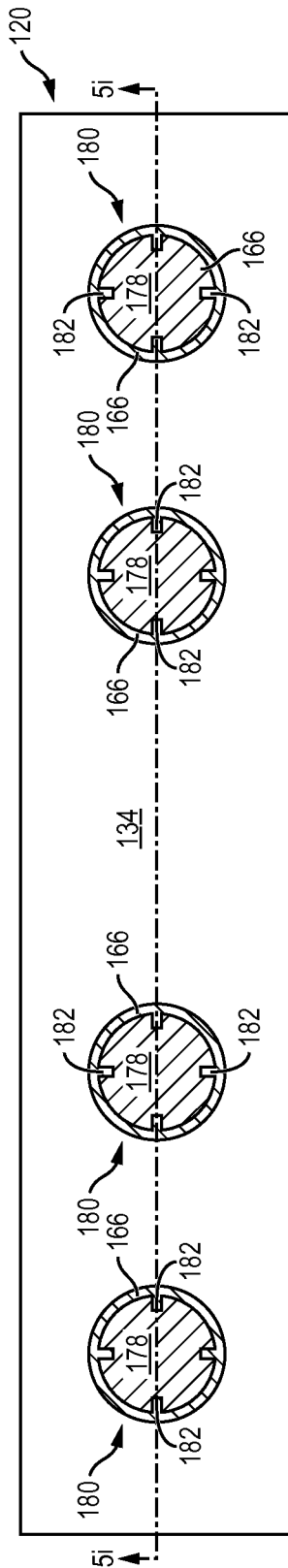


FIG. 5j

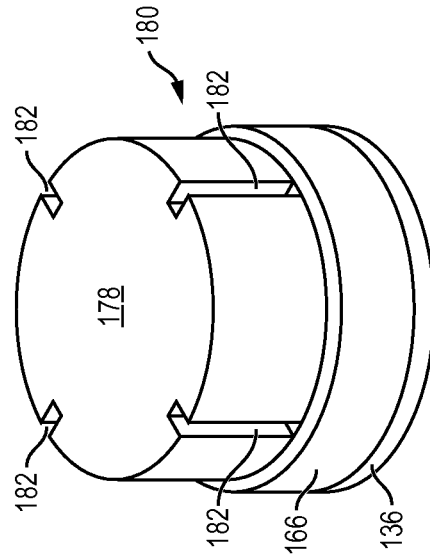


FIG. 5k

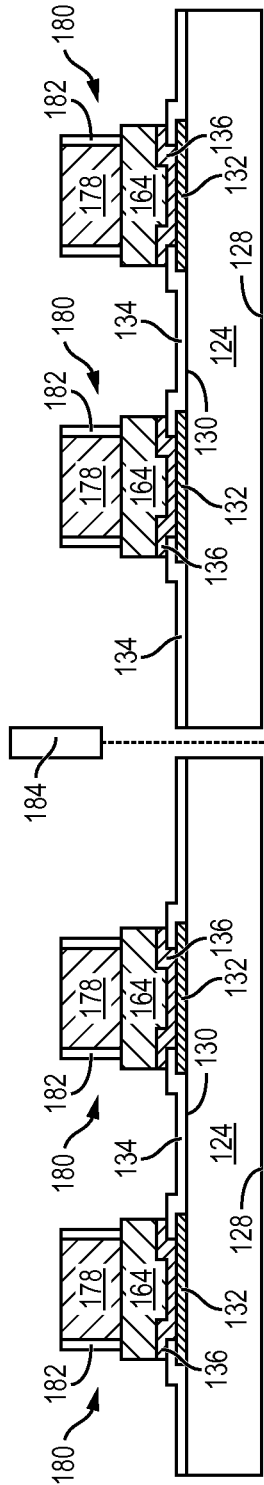


FIG. 5I

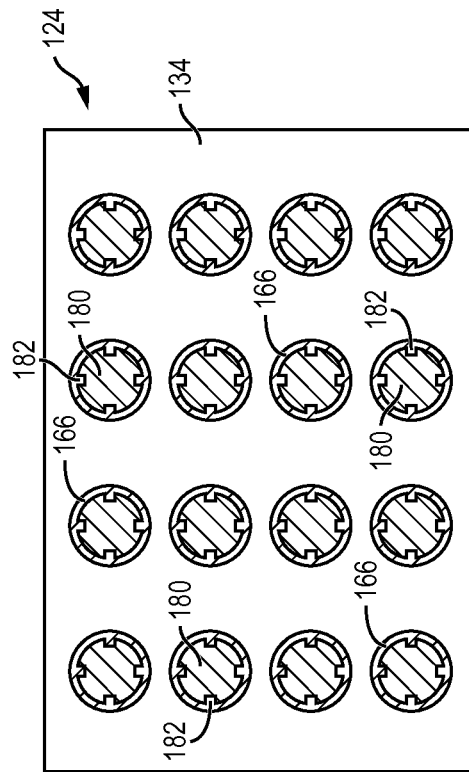


FIG. 6a

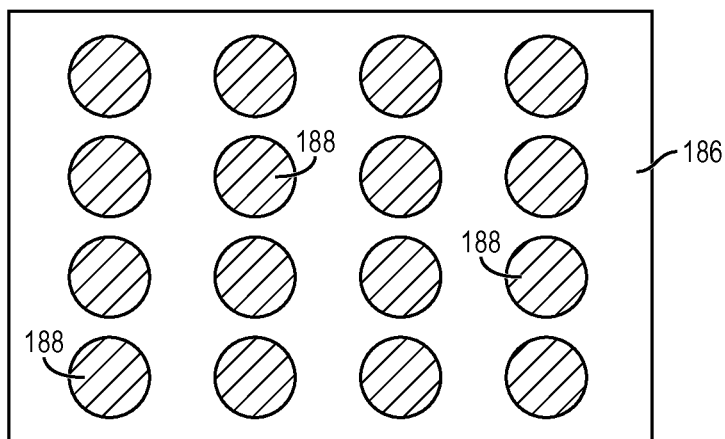


FIG. 6b

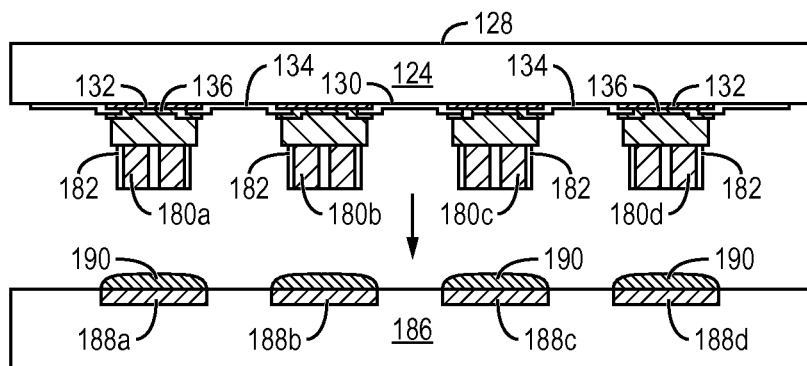


FIG. 6c

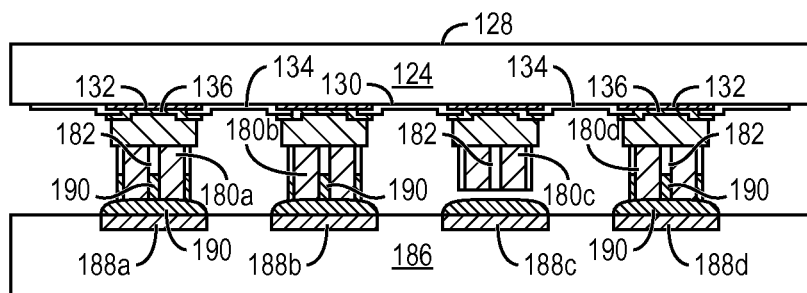


FIG. 6d

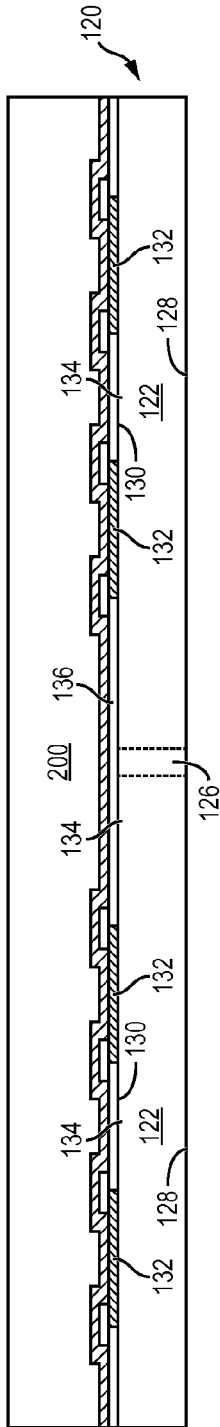


FIG. 7a

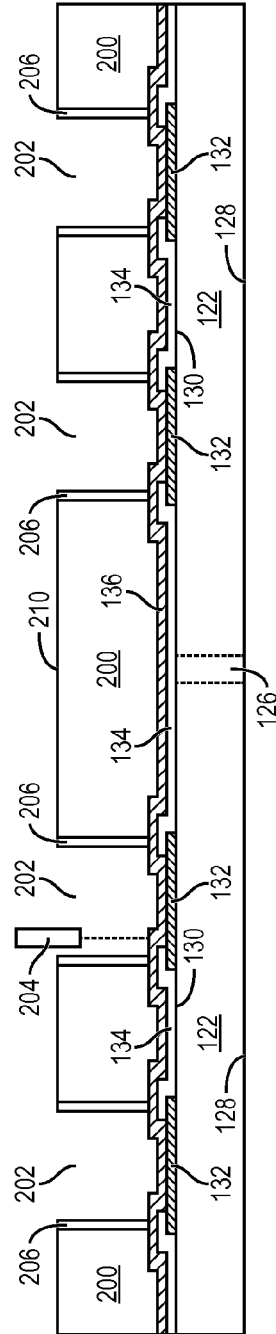


FIG. 7b

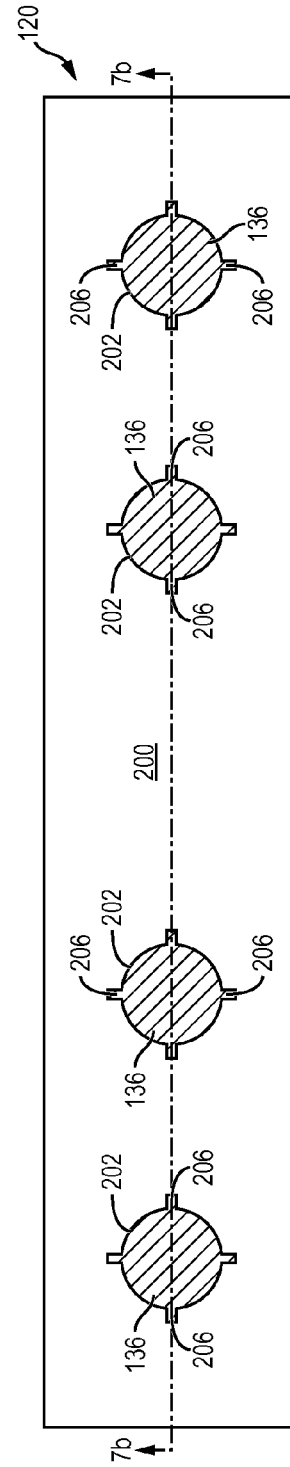


FIG. 7c

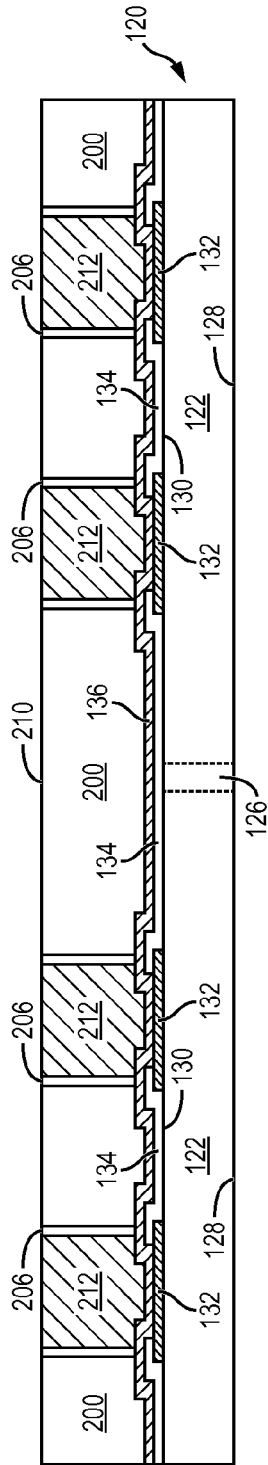


FIG. 7d

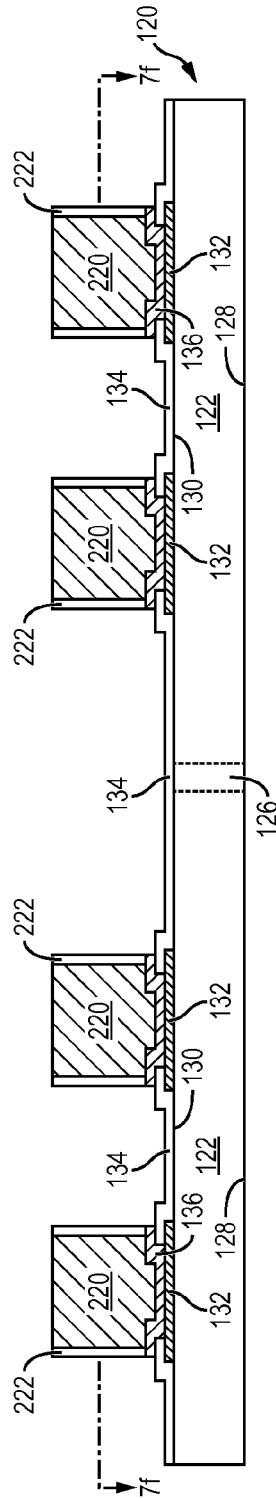


FIG. 7e

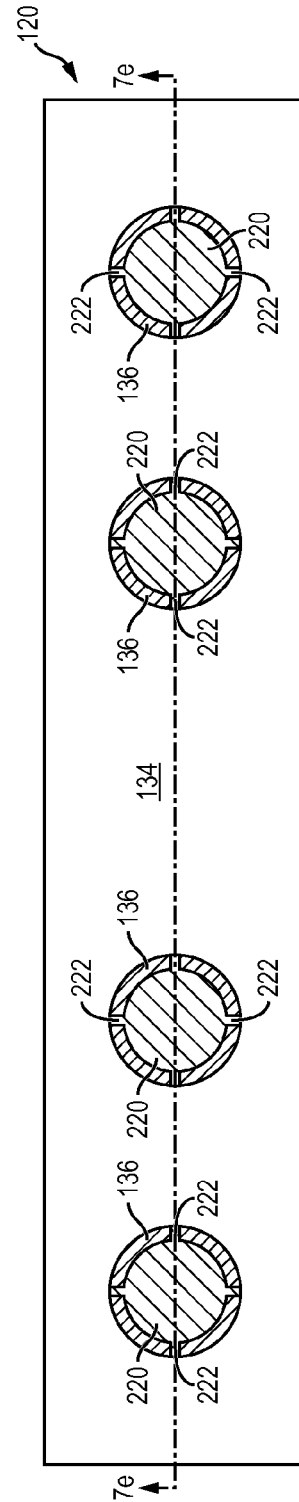


FIG. 7f

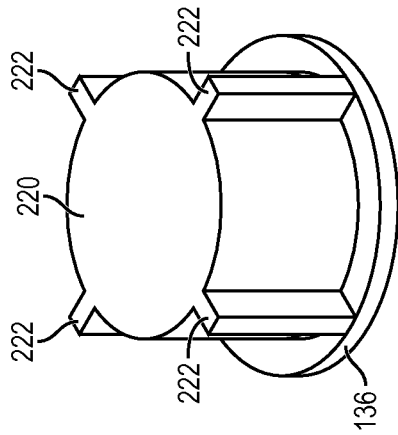


FIG. 7g

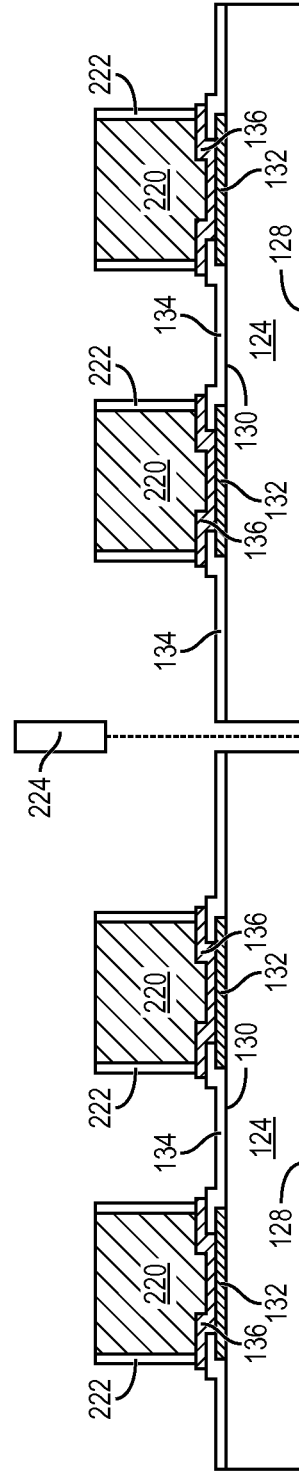


FIG. 7h

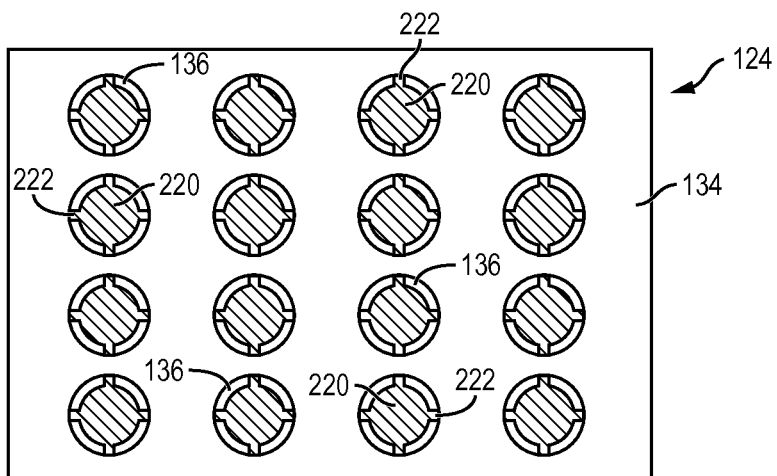


FIG. 8a

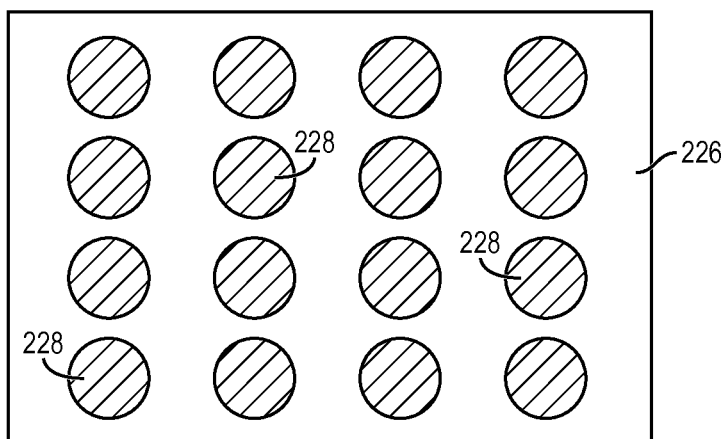


FIG. 8b

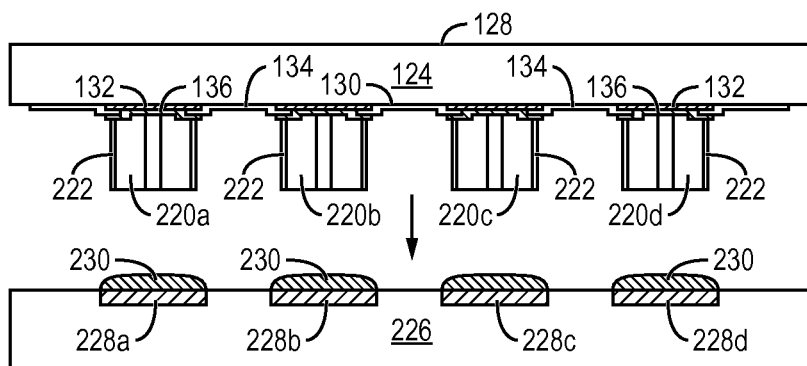


FIG. 8c

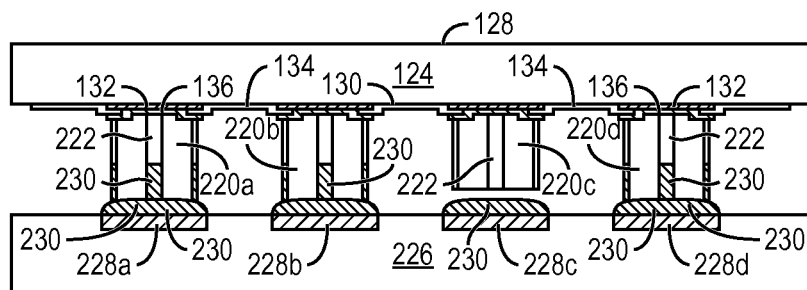


FIG. 8d

1

**SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICE WITH
CONDUCTIVE PILLARS HAVING RECESSES
OR PROTRUSIONS TO DETECT
INTERCONNECT CONTINUITY BETWEEN
SEMICONDUCTOR DIE AND SUBSTRATE**

CLAIM OF DOMESTIC PRIORITY

The present application is a division of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/324,349, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,741, 764, filed Dec. 13, 2011, which application is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates in general to semiconductor devices and, more particularly, to a semiconductor device and method of forming a conductive pillar having a recess or protrusion to detect continuity for an electrical interconnect between a semiconductor die and substrate.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Semiconductor devices are commonly found in modern electronic products. Semiconductor devices vary in the number and density of electrical components. Discrete semiconductor devices generally contain one type of electrical component, e.g., light emitting diode (LED), small signal transistor, resistor, capacitor, inductor, and power metal oxide semiconductor field effect transistor (MOSFET). Integrated semiconductor devices typically contain hundreds to millions of electrical components. Examples of integrated semiconductor devices include microcontrollers, microprocessors, charged-coupled devices (CCDs), solar cells, and digital micro-mirror devices (DMDs).

Semiconductor devices perform a wide range of functions such as signal processing, high-speed calculations, transmitting and receiving electromagnetic signals, controlling electronic devices, transforming sunlight to electricity, and creating visual projections for television displays. Semiconductor devices are found in the fields of entertainment, communications, power conversion, networks, computers, and consumer products. Semiconductor devices are also found in military applications, aviation, automotive, industrial controllers, and office equipment.

Semiconductor devices exploit the electrical properties of semiconductor materials. The atomic structure of semiconductor material allows its electrical conductivity to be manipulated by the application of an electric field or base current or through the process of doping. Doping introduces impurities into the semiconductor material to manipulate and control the conductivity of the semiconductor device.

A semiconductor device contains active and passive electrical structures. Active structures, including bipolar and field effect transistors, control the flow of electrical current. By varying levels of doping and application of an electric field or base current, the transistor either promotes or restricts the flow of electrical current. Passive structures, including resistors, capacitors, and inductors, create a relationship between voltage and current necessary to perform a variety of electrical functions. The passive and active structures are electrically connected to form circuits, which enable the semiconductor device to perform high-speed calculations and other useful functions.

Semiconductor devices are generally manufactured using two complex manufacturing processes, i.e., front-end manufacturing, and back-end manufacturing, each involving

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potentially hundreds of steps. Front-end manufacturing involves the formation of a plurality of die on the surface of a semiconductor wafer. Each semiconductor die is typically identical and contains circuits formed by electrically connecting active and passive components. Back-end manufacturing involves singulating individual semiconductor die from the finished wafer and packaging the die to provide structural support and environmental isolation. The term "semiconductor die" as used herein refers to both the singular and plural form of the words, and accordingly, can refer to both a single semiconductor device and multiple semiconductor devices.

One goal of semiconductor manufacturing is to produce smaller semiconductor devices. Smaller devices typically consume less power, have higher performance, and can be produced more efficiently. In addition, smaller semiconductor devices have a smaller footprint, which is desirable for smaller end products. A smaller semiconductor die size can be achieved by improvements in the front-end process resulting in semiconductor die with smaller, higher density active and passive components. Back-end processes may result in semiconductor device packages with a smaller footprint by improvements in electrical interconnection and packaging materials.

A conventional semiconductor die has a plurality of conductive pillars formed on the active surface of the die. A substrate has a plurality of contact pads and conductive traces formed on a surface of the substrate. The semiconductor die is mounted to the substrate and the conductive pillars are electrically and metallurgically connected to the contact pads or conductive traces. In some cases, less than all of the conductive pillars on the semiconductor die make good electrical contact to the contact pads or conductive traces on the substrate. An electrical interconnect failure between the conductive pillars on the semiconductor die and contact pads or conductive traces on the substrate should be detected during manufacturing.

X-ray imaging techniques are commonly used to examine the integrity of connections between the semiconductor die and substrate. X-ray imaging techniques have proven ineffective for the inspection of joints formed using conductive pillars and bump material in part because it is difficult to confirm the degree of interconnection of the joint formed between the conductive pillar and contact pad or conductive trace on the substrate.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A need exists to detect continuity of an electrical interconnect between the conductive pillars on the semiconductor die and contact pads or conductive traces on the substrate. Accordingly, in one embodiment, the present invention is a semiconductor device comprising a semiconductor die. A conductive pillar with a recess or protrusion is formed over a surface of the semiconductor die. A substrate includes a bump material deposited over a surface of the substrate to flow into the recess or over the protrusion.

In another embodiment, the present invention is a semiconductor device comprising a semiconductor die. A conductive pillar includes a recess or protrusion is formed over a surface of the semiconductor die. A bump material is reflowed over the conductive pillar to indicate electrical continuity.

In another embodiment, the present invention is a semiconductor device comprising a semiconductor die. A con-

ductive pillar including a recess or protrusion is formed over a surface of the semiconductor die to indicate electrical continuity.

In another embodiment, the present invention is a semiconductor device comprising a semiconductor die and a conductive pillar including a recess or protrusion formed over a surface of the semiconductor die.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 illustrates a printed circuit board with different types of packages mounted to its surface;

FIGS. 2a-2c illustrate further detail of the representative semiconductor packages mounted to the printed circuit board;

FIGS. 3a-3m illustrate a process of forming a conductive pillar having a recess on a semiconductor die;

FIGS. 4a-4f illustrate mounting the semiconductor die to the substrate and detecting continuity of the electrical interconnect by presence of bump material in the recess;

FIGS. 5a-5l illustrate a process of forming a multi-layer conductive pillar having a recess on a semiconductor die;

FIGS. 6a-6d illustrate mounting the semiconductor die to the substrate and detecting continuity of the electrical interconnect by presence of bump material in the recess;

FIGS. 7a-7h illustrate a process of forming a conductive pillar having a protrusion on a semiconductor die; and

FIGS. 8a-8d illustrate mounting the semiconductor die to the substrate and detecting continuity of the electrical interconnect by presence of bump material on the protrusion.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention is described in one or more embodiments in the following description with reference to the figures, in which like numerals represent the same or similar elements. While the invention is described in terms of the best mode for achieving the invention's objectives, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that it is intended to cover alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims and their equivalents as supported by the following disclosure and drawings.

Semiconductor devices are generally manufactured using two complex manufacturing processes: front-end manufacturing and back-end manufacturing. Front-end manufacturing involves the formation of a plurality of die on the surface of a semiconductor wafer. Each die on the wafer contains active and passive electrical components, which are electrically connected to form functional electrical circuits. Active electrical components, such as transistors and diodes, have the ability to control the flow of electrical current. Passive electrical components, such as capacitors, inductors, resistors, and transformers, create a relationship between voltage and current necessary to perform electrical circuit functions.

Passive and active components are formed over the surface of the semiconductor wafer by a series of process steps including doping, deposition, photolithography, etching, and planarization. Doping introduces impurities into the semiconductor material by techniques such as ion implantation or thermal diffusion. The doping process modifies the electrical conductivity of semiconductor material in active devices, transforming the semiconductor material into an insulator, conductor, or dynamically changing the semiconductor material conductivity in response to an electric field or base current. Transistors contain regions of varying types and degrees of doping arranged as necessary to enable the

transistor to promote or restrict the flow of electrical current upon the application of the electric field or base current.

Active and passive components are formed by layers of materials with different electrical properties. The layers can be formed by a variety of deposition techniques determined in part by the type of material being deposited. For example, thin film deposition can involve chemical vapor deposition (CVD), physical vapor deposition (PVD), electrolytic plating, and electroless plating processes. Each layer is generally patterned to form portions of active components, passive components, or electrical connections between components.

The layers can be patterned using photolithography, which involves the deposition of light sensitive material, e.g., photoresist, over the layer to be patterned. A pattern is transferred from a photomask to the photoresist using light. In one embodiment, the portion of the photoresist pattern subjected to light is removed using a solvent, exposing portions of the underlying layer to be patterned. In another embodiment, the portion of the photoresist pattern not subjected to light, the negative photoresist, is removed using a solvent, exposing portions of the underlying layer to be patterned. The remainder of the photoresist is removed, leaving behind a patterned layer. Alternatively, some types of materials are patterned by directly depositing the material into the areas or voids formed by a previous deposition/etch process using techniques such as electroless and electrolytic plating.

Patterning is the basic operation by which portions of the top layers on the semiconductor wafer surface are removed. Portions of the semiconductor wafer can be removed using photolithography, photomasking, masking, oxide or metal removal, photography and stenciling, and microlithography. Photolithography includes forming a pattern in reticles or a photomask and transferring the pattern into the surface layers of the semiconductor wafer. Photolithography forms the horizontal dimensions of active and passive components on the surface of the semiconductor wafer in a two-step process. First, the pattern on the reticle or masks is transferred into a layer of photoresist. Photoresist is a light-sensitive material that undergoes changes in structure and properties when exposed to light. The process of changing the structure and properties of the photoresist occurs as either negative-acting photoresist or positive-acting photoresist. Second, the photoresist layer is transferred into the wafer surface. The transfer occurs when etching removes the portion of the top layers of semiconductor wafer not covered by the photoresist. The chemistry of photoresists is such that the photoresist remains substantially intact and resists removal by chemical etching solutions while the portion of the top layers of the semiconductor wafer not covered by the photoresist is removed. The process of forming, exposing, and removing the photoresist, as well as the process of removing a portion of the semiconductor wafer can be modified according to the particular resist used and the desired results.

In negative-acting photoresists, photoresist is exposed to light and is changed from a soluble condition to an insoluble condition in a process known as polymerization. In polymerization, unpolymerized material is exposed to a light or energy source and polymers form a cross-linked material that is etch-resistant. In most negative resists, the polymers are polyisoprenes. Removing the soluble portions (i.e., the portions not exposed to light) with chemical solvents or developers leaves a hole in the resist layer that corresponds to the opaque pattern on the reticle. A mask whose pattern exists in the opaque regions is called a clear-field mask.

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In positive-acting photoresists, photoresist is exposed to light and is changed from relatively nonsoluble condition to much more soluble condition in a process known as photosolubilization. In photosolubilization, the relatively insoluble resist is exposed to the proper light energy and is converted to a more soluble state. The photosolubilized part of the resist can be removed by a solvent in the development process. The basic positive photoresist polymer is the phenol-formaldehyde polymer, also called the phenol-formaldehyde novolak resin. Removing the soluble portions (i.e., the portions exposed to light) with chemical solvents or developers leaves a hole in the resist layer that corresponds to the transparent pattern on the reticle. A mask whose pattern exists in the transparent regions is called a dark-field mask.

After removal of the top portion of the semiconductor wafer not covered by the photoresist, the remainder of the photoresist is removed, leaving behind a patterned layer. Alternatively, some types of materials are patterned by directly depositing the material into the areas or voids formed by a previous deposition/etch process using techniques such as electroless and electrolytic plating.

Depositing a thin film of material over an existing pattern can exaggerate the underlying pattern and create a non-uniformly flat surface. A uniformly flat surface is required to produce smaller and more densely packed active and passive components. Planarization can be used to remove material from the surface of the wafer and produce a uniformly flat surface. Planarization involves polishing the surface of the wafer with a polishing pad. An abrasive material and corrosive chemical are added to the surface of the wafer during polishing. The combined mechanical action of the abrasive and corrosive action of the chemical removes any irregular topography, resulting in a uniformly flat surface.

Back-end manufacturing refers to cutting or singulating the finished wafer into the individual semiconductor die and then packaging the semiconductor die for structural support and environmental isolation. To singulate the semiconductor die, the wafer is scored and broken along non-functional regions of the wafer called saw streets or scribes. The wafer is singulated using a laser cutting tool or saw blade. After singulation, the individual semiconductor die are mounted to a package substrate that includes pins or contact pads for interconnection with other system components. Contact pads formed over the semiconductor die are then connected to contact pads within the package. The electrical connections can be made with solder bumps, stud bumps, conductive paste, or wirebonds. An encapsulant or other molding material is deposited over the package to provide physical support and electrical isolation. The finished package is then inserted into an electrical system and the functionality of the semiconductor device is made available to the other system components.

FIG. 1 illustrates electronic device 50 having a chip carrier substrate or printed circuit board (PCB) 52 with a plurality of semiconductor packages mounted on its surface. Electronic device 50 can have one type of semiconductor package, or multiple types of semiconductor packages, depending on the application. The different types of semiconductor packages are shown in FIG. 1 for purposes of illustration.

Electronic device 50 can be a stand-alone system that uses the semiconductor packages to perform one or more electrical functions. Alternatively, electronic device 50 can be a subcomponent of a larger system. For example, electronic device 50 can be part of a cellular phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), digital video camera (DVC), or other

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electronic communication device. Alternatively, electronic device 50 can be a graphics card, network interface card, or other signal processing card that can be inserted into a computer. The semiconductor package can include micro-processors, memories, application specific integrated circuits (ASIC), logic circuits, analog circuits, RF circuits, discrete devices, or other semiconductor die or electrical components. Miniaturization and weight reduction are essential for these products to be accepted by the market. The distance between semiconductor devices must be decreased to achieve higher density.

In FIG. 1, PCB 52 provides a general substrate for structural support and electrical interconnect of the semiconductor packages mounted on the PCB. Conductive signal traces 54 are formed over a surface or within layers of PCB 52 using evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, screen printing, or other suitable metal deposition process. Signal traces 54 provide for electrical communication between each of the semiconductor packages, mounted components, and other external system components. Traces 54 also provide power and ground connections to each of the semiconductor packages.

In some embodiments, a semiconductor device has two packaging levels. First level packaging is a technique for mechanically and electrically attaching the semiconductor die to an intermediate carrier. Second level packaging involves mechanically and electrically attaching the intermediate carrier to the PCB. In other embodiments, a semiconductor device may only have the first level packaging where the die is mechanically and electrically mounted directly to the PCB.

For the purpose of illustration, several types of first level packaging, including bond wire package 56 and flipchip 58, are shown on PCB 52. Additionally, several types of second level packaging, including ball grid array (BGA) 60, bump chip carrier (BCC) 62, dual in-line package (DIP) 64, land grid array (LGA) 66, multi-chip module (MCM) 68, quad flat non-leaded package (QFN) 70, and quad flat package 72, are shown mounted on PCB 52. Depending upon the system requirements, any combination of semiconductor packages, configured with any combination of first and second level packaging styles, as well as other electronic components, can be connected to PCB 52. In some embodiments, electronic device 50 includes a single attached semiconductor package, while other embodiments call for multiple interconnected packages. By combining one or more semiconductor packages over a single substrate, manufacturers can incorporate pre-made components into electronic devices and systems. Because the semiconductor packages include sophisticated functionality, electronic devices can be manufactured using less expensive components and a streamlined manufacturing process. The resulting devices are less likely to fail and less expensive to manufacture resulting in a lower cost for consumers.

FIGS. 2a-2c show exemplary semiconductor packages. FIG. 2a illustrates further detail of DIP 64 mounted on PCB 52. Semiconductor die 74 includes an active region containing analog or digital circuits implemented as active devices, passive devices, conductive layers, and dielectric layers formed within the die and are electrically interconnected according to the electrical design of the die. For example, the circuit can include one or more transistors, diodes, inductors, capacitors, resistors, and other circuit elements formed within the active region of semiconductor die 74. Contact pads 76 are one or more layers of conductive material, such as aluminum (Al), copper (Cu), tin (Sn), nickel (Ni), gold (Au), or silver (Ag), and are electrically connected to the

circuit elements formed within semiconductor die **74**. During assembly of DIP **64**, semiconductor die **74** is mounted to an intermediate carrier **78** using a gold-silicon eutectic layer or adhesive material such as thermal epoxy or epoxy resin. The package body includes an insulative packaging material such as polymer or ceramic. Conductor leads **80** and bond wires **82** provide electrical interconnect between semiconductor die **74** and PCB **52**. Encapsulant **84** is deposited over the package for environmental protection by preventing moisture and particles from entering the package and contaminating semiconductor die **74** or bond wires **82**.

FIG. **2b** illustrates further detail of BCC **62** mounted on PCB **52**. Semiconductor die **88** is mounted over carrier **90** using an underfill or epoxy-resin adhesive material **92**. Bond wires **94** provide first level packaging interconnect between contact pads **96** and **98**. Molding compound or encapsulant **100** is deposited over semiconductor die **88** and bond wires **94** to provide physical support and electrical isolation for the device. Contact pads **102** are formed over a surface of PCB **52** using a suitable metal deposition process such as electrolytic plating or electroless plating to prevent oxidation. Contact pads **102** are electrically connected to one or more conductive signal traces **54** in PCB **52**. Bumps **104** are formed between contact pads **98** of BCC **62** and contact pads **102** of PCB **52**.

In FIG. **2c**, semiconductor die **58** is mounted face down to intermediate carrier **106** with a flipchip style first level packaging. Active region **108** of semiconductor die **58** contains analog or digital circuits implemented as active devices, passive devices, conductive layers, and dielectric layers formed according to the electrical design of the die. For example, the circuit can include one or more transistors, diodes, inductors, capacitors, resistors, and other circuit elements within active region **108**. Semiconductor die **58** is electrically and mechanically connected to carrier **106** through bumps **110**.

BGA **60** is electrically and mechanically connected to PCB **52** with a BGA style second level packaging using bumps **112**. Semiconductor die **58** is electrically connected to conductive signal traces **54** in PCB **52** through bumps **110**, signal lines **114**, and bumps **112**. A molding compound or encapsulant **116** is deposited over semiconductor die **58** and carrier **106** to provide physical support and electrical isolation for the device. The flipchip semiconductor device provides a short electrical conduction path from the active devices on semiconductor die **58** to conduction tracks on PCB **52** in order to reduce signal propagation distance, lower capacitance, and improve overall circuit performance. In another embodiment, the semiconductor die **58** can be mechanically and electrically connected directly to PCB **52** using flipchip style first level packaging without intermediate carrier **106**.

FIGS. **3a-3m** illustrate, in relation to FIGS. **1** and **2a-2c**, a process of forming a conductive pillar having a recess on a semiconductor die. FIG. **3a** shows a semiconductor wafer **120** with a base substrate material **122**, such as silicon, germanium, gallium arsenide, indium phosphide, or silicon carbide, for structural support. A plurality of semiconductor die or components **124** is formed on wafer **120** separated by a non-active, inter-die wafer area or saw street **126** as described above. Saw street **126** provides cutting areas to singulate semiconductor wafer **120** into individual semiconductor die **124**.

FIG. **3b** shows a cross-sectional view of a portion of semiconductor wafer **120**. Each semiconductor die **124** has a back surface **128** and active surface **130** containing analog or digital circuits implemented as active devices, passive

devices, conductive layers, and dielectric layers formed within the die and electrically interconnected according to the electrical design and function of the die. For example, the circuit may include one or more transistors, diodes, and other circuit elements formed within active surface **130** to implement analog circuits or digital circuits, such as digital signal processor (DSP), ASIC, memory, or other signal processing circuit. Semiconductor die **124** may also contain integrated passive devices (IPDs), such as inductors, capacitors, and resistors, for RF signal processing. In one embodiment, semiconductor die **124** is a flipchip type device.

An electrically conductive layer **132** is formed over active surface **130** using PVD, CVD, electrolytic plating, electroless plating process, or other suitable metal deposition process. Conductive layer **132** can be one or more layers of Al, Cu, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, or other suitable electrically conductive material. Conductive layer **132** operates as contact pads electrically connected to the circuits on active surface **130**. Conductive layer **132** can be disposed side-by-side a first distance from the edge of semiconductor die **124**, as shown in FIG. **3b**. Alternatively, conductive layer **132** can be offset in multiple rows such that a first row of contact pads is disposed a first distance from the edge of the die, and a second row of contact pads alternating with the first row is disposed a second distance from the edge of the die.

In FIG. **3c**, an insulating or passivation layer **134** is conformally applied over active surface **130** and conductive layer **132** using PVD, CVD, printing, spin coating, spray coating, sintering or thermal oxidation. The insulating layer **134** contains one or more layers of silicon dioxide (SiO₂), silicon nitride (Si₃N₄), silicon oxynitride (SiON), tantalum pentoxide (Ta₂O₅), aluminum oxide (Al₂O₃), or other material having similar insulating and structural properties. A portion of insulating layer **134** is removed by an etching process through a patterned photoresist layer to expose conductive layer **132**. Alternatively, a portion of insulating layer **134** is removed by laser direct ablation (LDA) using laser **135** to expose conductive layer **132**. In one embodiment, the exposed width of conductive layer **132** is 15-80 μm. A portion of conductive layer **132** remains covered by insulating layer **134**.

In FIG. **3d**, a blanket conductive layer **136** is conformally applied over insulating layer **134** and conductive layer **132** using a patterning and metal deposition process such as printing, PVD, CVD, electrolytic plating, and electroless plating. In one embodiment, blanket conductive layer **136** acts as a seed layer. Conductive layer **136** can be any suitable alloy seed layer, such as titanium copper (TiCu), titanium tungsten copper (TiWCu), or tantalum nitrogen copper (TaNCu). Conductive layer **136** is electrically connected to conductive layer **132** and follows the contour of insulating layer **134** and conductive layer **132**.

In FIG. **3e**, a patterning or photoresist layer **138** is formed over conductive layer **136** using printing, spin coating, or spray coating. In some embodiments that utilize an insulating layer for patterning, the insulating layer can include one or more layers of SiO₂, Si₃N₄, SiON, Ta₂O₅, Al₂O₃, or other material having similar structural properties.

In FIG. **3f**, a portion of photoresist layer **138** is removed by an etching process to form openings **140** and expose conductive layer **136** over conductive layer **132**. The openings **140** include a plurality of protrusions or projections **142** of photoresist layer **138** extending inward into the opening. Alternatively, openings **140** are formed by LDA using laser **141** to expose conductive layer **136** over conductive layer **132**.

FIG. 3g shows a plan view of photoresist layer 138 and openings 140. In one embodiment, openings 140 have a generally cylindrical shape with a generally circular cross-section. In another embodiment, openings 140 have a generally cubic shape with a generally rectangular cross-section. In particular, protrusions 142 are formed on four equally spaced locations around openings 140 and extend vertically from conductive layer 136 to surface 143.

In FIG. 3h, an electrically conductive material 144 is deposited within openings 140 around protrusions 142 and over conductive layer 136 using an evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, or screen printing process. Conductive material 144 can be one or more layers of Al, Cu, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, or other suitable electrically conductive material. The volume of conductive material 144 deposited into openings 140 is determined by a thickness of photoresist layer 138 and a cross-sectional area or aperture size of openings 140, taking into account protrusions 142.

In FIG. 3i, photoresist layer 138, including protrusions 142, is removed using an etching process and leaving conductive pillars 146 having recesses or notches 148 formed over conductive layer 136. A portion of conductive layer 136 outside a footprint of conductive pillars 146 is also removed by an etching process to expose insulating layer 134. FIG. 3j shows a plan view of conductive pillars 146 with recesses 148 formed over semiconductor die 124, taken along line 3j-3j of FIG. 3i. FIG. 3k shows a plan view of conductive pillars 146 with recesses 148 formed over semiconductor die 124, taken along line 3k-3k of FIG. 3i. FIG. 3l shows a prospective view of one conductive pillar 146 with recesses 148. In particular, removing protrusions 142 of photoresist layer 138 from conductive material 144 leaves recesses 148 in conductive pillar 146.

In FIG. 3m, semiconductor wafer 120 is singulated through insulating layer 134 and saw street 126 with saw blade or laser cutting tool 150 into individual semiconductor die 124.

FIG. 4a shows a plan view of semiconductor die 124 after singulation. The circuits formed on active surface 130 are electrically connected through conductive layer 132 and conductive layer 136 to conductive pillars 146.

FIG. 4b shows a plan view of substrate or PCB 152 for structural support and electrical interconnect to semiconductor die 124. Conductive layer 154 is formed over a surface or within layers of substrate 152 using evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, screen printing, or other suitable metal deposition process. Conductive layer 154 includes contact pads and conductive traces for electrical communication, as well as power and ground connections, to semiconductor die 124.

In FIG. 4c, an electrically conductive bump material 158 is deposited over conductive layer 154 using an evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, ball drop, or screen printing process. Bump material 158 can be Al, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, Pb, Bi, Cu, solder, and combinations thereof, with an optional flux solution. For example, bump material 158 can be eutectic Sn/Pb, high-lead solder, or lead-free solder. Alternatively, a conductive paste is deposited over conductive layer 154.

Semiconductor die 124 from FIGS. 3a-3m is positioned over substrate 152 using a pick and place operation with active surface 130 oriented toward the substrate and conductive pillars 146a-146d aligned to bump material 158 over conductive layer 154a-154d. Prior to pressing conductive pillars 146 onto conductive layer 154, the temperature of bump material 158 is elevated to melt the bump material.

In the present example, conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d have greater height than conductive pillar 146c due to process variation or warpage. Semiconductor die 124 is pressed toward substrate 152 and conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d make electrical and metallurgical connection to conductive layer 154a, 154b, and 154d, respectively. Due to its lesser height or warpage, conductive pillar 146c fails to make contact with bump material 158 of conductive pillar 146c.

FIG. 4d shows semiconductor die 124 mounted to substrate 152 with conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d electrically and metallurgically connected to conductive layer 154a, 154b, and 154d with bump material 158, respectively. Conductive pillars 146 have recesses 148 extending above the joint between conductive pillar 146 and conductive layer 154 for detecting electrical interconnect continuity by X-ray or visual inspection. Recesses 148 of conductive pillars 146 also provide greater contact surface between the conductive pillar and bump material 158. When conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d of semiconductor die 124 are pressed into bump material 158 over conductive layer 154a, 154b, and 154d of substrate 152, the melted bump material 158 flows into recesses 148 of conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d. Bump material 158 is present and can be detected in recesses 148 of conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d extending above the joint between conductive layer 154a, 154b, and 154d and the corresponding conductive pillars. Due to its lesser height or warpage, conductive pillar 146c fails to make contact with bump material 158 and is not pressed onto conductive layer 154c. The melted bump material 158 does not flow into recess 148 of conductive pillar 146c.

FIG. 4e shows an isolated prospective view of conductive pillar 146a electrically and metallurgically connected to conductive layer 154a with bump material 158. Bump material 158 has dispersed into recesses 148 as conductive pillar 146a is pressed onto conductive layer 154a. FIG. 4f shows an isolated prospective view of conductive pillar 146c failing to make electrical and metallurgical connection to conductive layer 154c. Due to its lesser height or warpage, conductive pillar 146c is not pressed onto the melted bump material 158 over conductive layer 154c. The melted bump material 158 does not flow into recess 148 of conductive pillar 146c.

Accordingly, conductive pillars 146 with recesses 148 provide continuity confirmation or inspection and fault detection for electrical interconnects between semiconductor die 124 and substrate 152. In the present example, conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d have been pressed into bump material 158 over conductive layer 154a, 154b, and 154d to a sufficient depth that a portion of the melted bump material flows into recesses 148 of conductive pillars 146a, 146b, and 146d. The presence of bump material 158 in recesses 148 indicates electrical continuity and a reliable interconnect union between conductive pillars 146 and conductive layer 154. In the case of conductive pillar 146c, the melted bump material 158 does not flow into recesses 148 of conductive pillar 146c due to failure to make metallurgical connection to conductive layer 154c. The absence of bump material 158 in recesses 148 of conductive pillar 146c indicates no electrical continuity, no interconnect union, or less than reliable interconnect union between conductive pillar 146c and conductive layer 154c. Since recesses 148 extend above the joint between conductive pillar 146 and conductive layer 154, the presence or absence of bump material 158 in recesses 148 can be readily detected or observable by X-ray or visual inspection.

FIGS. 5a-5f illustrate, in relation to FIGS. 1 and 2a-2c, a process of forming a multi-layer conductive pillar having a recess on a semiconductor die. Continuing from FIG. 3d, a patterning or photoresist layer 160 is formed over conductive layer 136 using printing, spin coating, or spray coating, as shown in FIG. 5a. In some embodiments that utilize an insulating layer for patterning, the insulating layer can include one or more layers of SiO₂, Si₃N₄, SiON, Ta₂O₅, Al₂O₃, or other material having similar structural properties.

In FIG. 5b, a portion of photoresist layer 160 is removed by an etching process to form openings 162 and expose conductive layer 136 over conductive layer 132. Alternatively, openings 162 are formed by LDA using laser 164 to expose conductive layer 136 over conductive layer 132. FIG. 5c shows a plan view of photoresist layer 160 and openings 162.

In FIG. 5d, an electrically conductive material 166 is deposited within openings 162 over conductive layer 136 using an evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, or screen printing process. Conductive material 166 can be one or more layers of Al, Cu, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, or other suitable electrically conductive material. The volume of conductive material 166 deposited into openings 162 is determined by a thickness of photoresist layer 160 and a cross-sectional area or aperture size of openings 162.

In FIG. 5e, a patterning or photoresist layer 168 is formed over photoresist layer 160 and conductive material 166 using printing, spin coating, or spray coating. In some embodiments that utilize an insulating layer for patterning, the insulating layer can include one or more layers of SiO₂, Si₃N₄, SiON, Ta₂O₅, Al₂O₃, or other material having similar structural properties.

In FIG. 5f, a portion of photoresist layer 168 is removed by an etching process to form openings 170 and expose conductive material 166. The openings 170 include a plurality of protrusions or projections 174 of photoresist layer 168 extending inward into the opening. Alternatively, openings 170 with protrusions 174 are formed by LDA using laser 164 to expose conductive material 166. The openings 170 have a width less than a width of conductive material 166.

FIG. 5g shows a plan view of photoresist layer 168 and openings 170. In particular, protrusions 174 are formed on four equally spaced locations around openings 170 and extend vertically from conductive material 166 to surface 176.

In FIG. 5h, an electrically conductive material 178 is deposited within openings 170 around protrusions 174 and over conductive layer 166 using an evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, or screen printing process. Conductive material 178 can be one or more layers of Al, Cu, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, or other suitable electrically conductive material. The volume of conductive material 178 deposited into openings 170 is determined by a thickness of photoresist layer 168 and a cross-sectional area or aperture size of openings 170, taking into account protrusions 174.

In FIG. 5i, photoresist layers 160 and 168, including protrusions 174, are removed using an etching process and leaving conductive pillars 180 with recesses or notches 182 formed over conductive layer 136. Conductive pillars 180 are multi-layered with conductive material 178 stacked over conductive material 166. In one embodiment, conductive pillars 180 have a generally cylindrical shape with a generally circular cross-section. In another embodiment, conductive pillars 180 have a generally cubic shape with a generally rectangular cross-section. A portion of conductive layer 136

outside a footprint of conductive pillars 180 is also removed by an etching process to expose insulating layer 134. FIG. 5j shows a plan view of conductive pillars 180 with recesses 182 formed over semiconductor die 124, taken along line 5j-5j of FIG. 5i. FIG. 5k shows a prospective view of one conductive pillar 180 with recesses 182. In particular, removing protrusions 174 of photoresist layer 168 from conductive material 178 leaves recesses 182 in conductive pillars 180.

In FIG. 5l, semiconductor wafer 120 is singulated through insulating layer 134 and saw street 126 with saw blade or laser cutting tool 184 into individual semiconductor die 124.

FIG. 6a shows a plan view of semiconductor die 124 after singulation. The circuits formed on active surface 130 are electrically connected through conductive layer 132 and conductive layer 136 to multi-layer conductive pillars 180.

FIG. 6b shows a plan view of substrate or PCB 186 for structural support and electrical interconnect to semiconductor die 124. Conductive layer 188 is formed over a surface or within layers of substrate 186 using evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, screen printing, or other suitable metal deposition process. Conductive layer 188 includes contact pads and conductive traces for electrical communication, as well as power and ground connections, to semiconductor die 124.

In FIG. 6c, an electrically conductive bump material 190 is deposited over conductive layer 188 using an evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, ball drop, or screen printing process. Bump material 190 can be Al, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, Pb, Bi, Cu, solder, and combinations thereof, with an optional flux solution. For example, bump material 190 can be eutectic Sn/Pb, high-lead solder, or lead-free solder. Alternatively, a conductive paste is deposited over conductive layer 188.

Semiconductor die 124 from FIGS. 5a-5f is positioned over substrate 186 using a pick and place operation with active surface 130 oriented toward the substrate and conductive pillars 180a-180d aligned to bump material 190 over conductive layer 188a-188d. Prior to pressing conductive pillars 180 onto conductive layer 188, the temperature of bump material 190 is elevated to melt the bump material.

In the present example, conductive pillars 180a, 180b, and 180d have greater height than conductive pillar 180c due to process variation or warpage. Semiconductor die 124 is pressed toward substrate 186 and conductive pillars 180a, 180b, and 180d make electrical and metallurgical connection to conductive layer 188a, 188b, and 188d, respectively. Due to its lesser height or warpage, conductive pillar 180c fails to make contact with bump material 190 on conductive layer 188c.

FIG. 6d shows semiconductor die 124 mounted to substrate 186 with conductive pillars 180a, 180b, and 180d electrically and metallurgically connected to conductive layer 188a, 188b, and 188d with bump material 190, respectively. Conductive pillars 180 have recesses 182 extending above the joint between conductive pillar 180 and conductive layer 188 for detecting electrical interconnect continuity by X-ray or visual inspection. Recesses 182 of conductive pillars 180 also provide greater contact surface between the conductive pillar and bump material 190. When conductive pillars 180a, 180b, and 180d of semiconductor die 124 are pressed into bump material 190 over conductive layer 188a, 188b, and 188d of substrate 186, the melted bump material 190 flows into recesses 182 of conductive pillars 180a, 180b, and 180d. Bump material 190 is present and can be detected in recesses 182 of conductive pillars 180a, 180b, and 180d extending above the joint between conductive

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layer **188a**, **188b**, and **188d** and the corresponding conductive pillars. Due to its lesser height or warpage, conductive pillar **180c** fails to make contact with bump material **190** and is not pressed onto conductive layer **188c**. The melted bump material **190** does not flow into recess **182** of conductive pillar **180c**.

Accordingly, conductive pillars **180** with recesses **182** provide continuity confirmation or inspection and fault detection for electrical interconnects between semiconductor die **124** and substrate **186**. Conductive pillars **180a**, **180b**, and **180d** have been pressed into bump material **190** over conductive layer **188a**, **188b**, and **188d** to a sufficient depth that a portion of the melted bump material flows into recesses **182** of conductive pillars **180a**, **180b**, and **180d**. The presence of bump material **190** in recesses **182** indicates electrical continuity and a reliable interconnect union between conductive pillars **180** and conductive layer **188**. In the case of conductive pillar **180c**, the melted bump material **190** does not flow into recesses **182** of conductive pillar **180c** due to failure to make metallurgical connection to conductive layer **188c**. The absence of bump material **190** in recesses **182** of conductive pillar **180c** indicates no electrical continuity, no interconnect union, or less than reliable interconnect union between conductive pillar **180c** and conductive layer **188c**. Since recesses **182** extend above the joint between conductive pillar **180** and conductive layer **188**, the presence or absence of bump material **190** in recesses **182** can be readily detected or observable by X-ray or visual inspection.

FIGS. **7a-7h** illustrate, in relation to FIGS. **1** and **2a-2c**, a process of forming a conductive pillar having a protrusion on a semiconductor die. Continuing from FIG. **3d**, a patterning or photoresist layer **200** is formed over conductive layer **136** using printing, spin coating, or spray coating, as shown in FIG. **7a**. In some embodiments that utilize an insulating layer for patterning, the insulating layer can include one or more layers of SiO₂, Si₃N₄, SiON, Ta₂O₅, Al₂O₃, or other material having similar structural properties.

In FIG. **7b**, a portion of photoresist layer **200** is removed by an etching process to form openings **202** and expose conductive layer **136** over conductive layer **132**. The openings **202** include a plurality of recesses or notches **206** extending outward into photoresist layer **200**. Alternatively, openings **202** are formed by LDA using laser **204** to expose conductive layer **136** over conductive layer **132**. FIG. **7c** shows a plan view of photoresist layer **200** with openings **202** and recesses **206**. In particular, recesses **206** are formed on four equally spaced locations around openings **202** and extend vertically from conductive layer **136** to surface **210**.

In FIG. **7d**, an electrically conductive material **212** is deposited within openings **202** and recesses **206** over conductive layer **136** using an evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, or screen printing process. Conductive material **212** can be one or more layers of Al, Cu, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, or other suitable electrically conductive material. The volume of conductive material **212** deposited into openings **202** is determined by a thickness of photoresist layer **200** and a cross-sectional area or aperture size of openings **202**, taking into account recesses **206**.

In FIG. **7e**, photoresist layer **200** is removed using an etching process and leaving conductive pillars **220** with protrusions **222** formed over conductive layer **136**. In one embodiment, conductive pillars **220** have a generally cylindrical shape with a generally circular cross-section. In another embodiment, conductive pillars **220** have a generally cubic shape with a generally rectangular cross-section.

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A portion of conductive layer **136** outside a footprint of conductive pillars **220** is also removed by an etching process to expose insulating layer **134**. FIG. **7f** shows a plan view of conductive pillars **220** with protrusions **222** formed over semiconductor die **124**, taken along line **7f-7f** of FIG. **7e**. FIG. **7g** shows a prospective view of one conductive pillar **220** with protrusions **222**. In particular, protrusions **222** are formed from conductive material **212** in recesses **206**.

In FIG. **7h**, semiconductor wafer **120** is singulated through insulating layer **134** and saw street **126** with saw blade or laser cutting tool **224** into individual semiconductor die **124**.

FIG. **8a** shows a plan view of semiconductor die **124** after singulation. The circuits formed on active surface **130** are electrically connected through conductive layer **132** and conductive layer **136** to conductive pillars **220**.

FIG. **8b** shows a plan view of substrate or PCB **226** for structural support and electrical interconnect to semiconductor die **124**. Conductive layer **228** is formed over a surface or within layers of substrate **226** using evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, screen printing, or other suitable metal deposition process. Conductive layer **228** includes contact pads and conductive traces for electrical communication, as well as power and ground connections, to semiconductor die **124**.

In FIG. **8c**, an electrically conductive bump material **230** is deposited over conductive layer **228** using an evaporation, electrolytic plating, electroless plating, ball drop, or screen printing process. Bump material **230** can be Al, Sn, Ni, Au, Ag, Pb, Bi, Cu, solder, and combinations thereof, with an optional flux solution. For example, bump material **230** can be eutectic Sn/Pb, high-lead solder, or lead-free solder. Alternatively, a conductive paste is deposited over conductive layer **228**.

Semiconductor die **124** from FIGS. **7a-7h** is positioned over substrate **226** using a pick and place operation with active surface **130** oriented toward the substrate and conductive pillars **220a-220d** aligned to bump material **230** over conductive layer **228a-228d**. Prior to pressing conductive pillars **220** onto conductive layer **228**, the temperature of bump material **230** is elevated to melt the bump material.

In the present example, conductive pillars **220a**, **220b**, and **220d** have greater height than conductive pillar **220c** due to process variation or warpage. Semiconductor die **124** is pressed toward substrate **226** and conductive pillars **220a**, **220b**, and **220d** make electrical and metallurgical connection to conductive layer **228a**, **228b**, and **228d**, respectively. Due to its lesser height or warpage, conductive pillar **220c** fails to make contact with bump material **230** on conductive layer **228c**.

FIG. **8d** shows semiconductor die **124** mounted to substrate **226** with conductive pillars **220a**, **220b**, and **220d** electrically and metallurgically connected to conductive layer **228a**, **228b**, and **228d** with bump material **230**, respectively. Conductive pillars **220** have protrusions **222** extending above the joint between conductive pillar **220** and conductive layer **228** for detecting electrical interconnect continuity by X-ray or visual inspection. Protrusions **222** of conductive pillars **220** also provide greater contact surface between the conductive pillar and bump material **230**. When conductive pillars **220** are pressed into bump material **230** over conductive layer **228**, the melted bump material **230** flows into protrusions **222** of conductive pillars **220a**, **220b**, and **220d**. Bump material **230** is present and can be detected on protrusions **222** of conductive pillars **220a**, **220b**, and **220d** extending above the joint between conductive layer **228a**, **228b**, and **228d** and the corresponding conductive

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pillars. Due to its lesser height or warpage, conductive pillar 220c fails to make contact with bump material 230 and is not pressed onto conductive layer 228c. The melted bump material 230 does not flow onto protrusion 222 of conductive pillar 220c.

Accordingly, conductive pillars 220 with protrusions 222 provide continuity confirmation or inspection and fault detection for electrical interconnects between semiconductor die 124 and substrate 226. Conductive pillars 220a, 220b, and 220d have been pressed into bump material 230 over conductive layer 228a, 228b, and 228d to a sufficient depth that a portion of the melted bump material flows onto protrusions 222 of conductive pillars 220a, 220b, and 220d. The presence of bump material 230 on protrusions 222 indicates electrical continuity and a reliable interconnect union between conductive pillars 220 and conductive layer 228. In the case of conductive pillar 220c, the melted bump material 230 does not flow into protrusions 222 of conductive pillar 220c due to failure to make metallurgical connection to conductive layer 228c. The absence of bump material 230 on protrusions 222 of conductive pillar 220c indicates no electrical continuity, no interconnect union, or less than reliable interconnect union between conductive pillar 220c and conductive layer 228c. Since protrusions extend above the joint between conductive pillar 220 and conductive layer 228, the presence or absence of bump material 230 on protrusions 222 can be readily detected or observable by X-ray or visual inspection.

In summary, semiconductor die 124 has conductive pillar 146 with recess 148 formed over a surface of the semiconductor die. Conductive pillar 146 with recess 148 is made by forming patterning layer 138 over semiconductor die 124, forming opening 140 with protrusion 142 in the patterning layer, depositing conductive material 144 in the opening and over the protrusion, and removing the patterning layer. In another embodiment, conductive pillar 180 with recess 182 is made by forming patterning layer 160 over semiconductor die 124, forming opening 162 in patterning layer 160, depositing conductive material 166 in the opening of the patterning layer, forming patterning layer 168 over patterning layer 160 and conductive material 166, forming opening 170 with protrusion 174 in patterning layer 168, depositing conductive material 178 in the opening and over the protrusion of the patterning layer, and removing patterning layers 160 and 168. In another embodiment, conductive pillar 220 with protrusion 222 is made by forming patterning layer 200 over semiconductor die 124, forming opening 202 with recess 206 in patterning layer 200, depositing conductive material 210 in the opening and recess, and removing patterning layer 200. The opening in the patterning layer can be formed by LDA. Substrate 152 has bump material 158 deposited over conductive layer 154 formed over a surface of the substrate. Bump material 158 is melted. Semiconductor die 124 is pressed toward substrate 152 to enable the melted bump material 158 to flow into recess 148 if conductive pillar 146 makes connection to conductive layer 154. A presence or absence of bump material 158 is detected in recess 148 of conductive pillar 146. A presence or absence of bump material can also be detected over protrusion 222 of conductive pillar 220. The presence or absence of bump material 158 in recess 148 of conductive pillar 146 is detected by X-ray or visual inspection. Recess 148 or protrusion 222 extends beyond a joint between the conductive pillar and conductive layer for ready X-ray or visual inspection.

While one or more embodiments of the present invention have been illustrated in detail, the skilled artisan will appreciate

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that modifications and adaptations to those embodiments may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention as set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed:

1. A semiconductor device, comprising:
 - a semiconductor die;
 - a conductive pillar formed over a surface of the semiconductor die, wherein the conductive pillar includes an exterior sidewall extending a height of the conductive pillar;
 - a recess formed in the exterior sidewall of the conductive pillar; and
 - a substrate including a bump material disposed over a surface of the substrate and into the recess.
2. The semiconductor device of claim 1, wherein an electrical connection between the semiconductor die and the substrate is confirmed by a presence of the bump material in the recess of the conductive pillar.
3. The semiconductor device of claim 2, wherein the presence or absence of the bump material in the recess of the conductive pillar is detectable by X-ray or visual inspection.
4. The semiconductor device of claim 1, wherein the conductive pillar includes:
 - a first conductive material; and
 - a second conductive material formed over the first conductive material.
5. The semiconductor device of claim 1, further including:
 - a first conductive layer formed over the surface of the semiconductor die;
 - an insulating layer formed over the first conductive layer and surface of the semiconductor die; and
 - a second conductive layer formed over the insulating layer and first conductive layer, wherein the conductive pillar is formed over the second conductive layer.
6. The semiconductor device of claim 1, further including a conductive layer formed over the substrate, wherein a presence of the bump material in the recess indicates an electrical connection between the conductive layer and conductive pillar.
7. A semiconductor device, comprising:
 - a semiconductor die;
 - a conductive pillar formed over a surface of the semiconductor die, wherein the conductive pillar includes a linear side surface extending a height of the conductive pillar;
 - a recess formed in the linear side surface of the conductive pillar or a protrusion extending laterally from the linear side surface of the conductive pillar; and
 - a bump material disposed in the recess or over the protrusion of the conductive pillar to indicate electrical continuity.
8. The semiconductor device of claim 7, further including a substrate mounted to the semiconductor die with an electrical connection confirmed by a presence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion of the conductive pillar.
9. The semiconductor device of claim 8, wherein the presence or absence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion of the conductive pillar is detectable by X-ray or visual inspection.
10. The semiconductor device of claim 8, further including a conductive layer formed over the substrate, wherein the presence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion indicates the electrical connection between the conductive layer and conductive pillar.
11. The semiconductor device of claim 10, wherein the recess or protrusion extends beyond a joint between the conductive pillar and conductive layer.

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12. The semiconductor device of claim 7, wherein the conductive pillar includes:

- a first conductive material; and
- a second conductive material including the recess or protrusion and formed over the first conductive material.

13. The semiconductor device of claim 7, further including:

- a first conductive layer formed over the surface of the semiconductor die;
- an insulating layer formed over the first conductive layer and surface of the semiconductor die; and
- a second conductive layer formed over the insulating layer and first conductive layer, wherein the conductive pillar is formed over the second conductive layer.

14. A semiconductor device, comprising:

- a semiconductor die; and
- a conductive pillar formed over a surface of the semiconductor die, wherein the conductive pillar includes a side surface extending a height of the conductive pillar and a recess formed in the side surface of the conductive pillar or a protrusion extending laterally from the side surface of the conductive pillar to indicate electrical continuity.

15. The semiconductor device of claim 14, further including a substrate mounted to the semiconductor die with the electrical continuity determined by a presence or an absence of a bump material in the recess or protrusion of the conductive pillar.

16. The semiconductor device of claim 15, wherein the presence or absence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion of the conductive pillar is detectable by X-ray or visual inspection.

17. The semiconductor device of claim 15, further including a conductive layer formed over the substrate, wherein the presence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion indicates an electrical connection between the conductive layer and conductive pillar.

18. The semiconductor device of claim 17, wherein the recess or protrusion extends beyond a joint between the conductive pillar and conductive layer.

19. The semiconductor device of claim 14, wherein the conductive pillar includes:

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a first conductive material; and

a second conductive material including the recess or protrusion and formed over the first conductive material.

20. The semiconductor device of claim 14, further including:

- a first conductive layer formed over the surface of the semiconductor die;
- an insulating layer formed over the first conductive layer and surface of the semiconductor die; and
- a second conductive layer formed over the insulating layer and first conductive layer, wherein the conductive pillar is formed over the second conductive layer.

21. A semiconductor device, comprising:

- a semiconductor die; and
- a conductive pillar formed over a surface of the semiconductor die, wherein the conductive pillar includes a recess extending along a side surface of the conductive pillar or a protrusion extending laterally from the side surface of the conductive pillar.

22. The semiconductor device of claim 21, further including a substrate with bump material deposited over the substrate, wherein the semiconductor die is mounted to the substrate with an electrical connection determined by a presence or absence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion of the conductive pillar.

23. The semiconductor device of claim 22, wherein the presence or absence of the bump material in the recess or protrusion of the conductive pillar is detected by X-ray or visual inspection.

24. The semiconductor device of claim 21, wherein the conductive pillar includes:

- a first conductive material; and
- a second conductive material with the recess or protrusion formed over the first conductive material.

25. The semiconductor device of claim 21, further including:

- a first conductive layer formed over the surface of the semiconductor die;
- an insulating layer formed over the first conductive layer and surface of the semiconductor die; and
- a second conductive layer formed over the insulating layer and first conductive layer, wherein the conductive pillar is formed over the second conductive layer.

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